

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 352 304

SO 022 680

TITLE Decisions for a Decade: Task Force Report and Recommendations, and Appendices A and B.

INSTITUTION Nanaimo School District #68 (British Columbia).

PUB DATE Jun 91

NOTE 226p.

AVAILABLE FROM School District #68 (Nanaimo), 395 Wakesian Avenue, Nanaimo, British Columbia V9R 3K6, Canada.

PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Community Resources; *Educational Assessment; Educational Change; *Educational Development; Educational Needs; Educational Objectives; *Educational Planning; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Futures (of Society); Needs Assessment; Parent Attitudes; *School Districts; School Effectiveness; School Personnel; Student Attitudes; Teacher Attitudes

IDENTIFIERS *Nanaimo School District 68 BC

ABSTRACT

These materials feature the report and recommendations of a task force that was asked to develop a strategic plan that identifies the present and future needs of the Nanaimo (British Columbia) School District and recommends strategies for policy development and implementation in the years ahead. The task force gathered information for its recommendations by conducting surveys of the general public (parents and non-parents), business and professional organizations, recent grade 12 students, elementary students, secondary students, parents, and all employees of the school district (teachers, support staff, and administration). Another source of direct public input utilized by the task force was a series of 13 public meetings. Three documents concerning the Task Force's work are included in these materials. The first is the Task Force report and recommendations that summarizes research on educational change and planning for educational change, and includes the findings and recommendations concerning students, personnel resources, program resources, material resources, and community resources. A list of selected resources also is included. The second document is appendix A which presents the results of the surveys conducted for the Task Force. Four main areas of concern were addressed through the surveys: (1) opinion about the learning environment in School District 68; (2) views on school district communication; (3) views on education "options" in School District 68; and (4) overall satisfaction with the school district. An analysis of comments made by four groups (elementary and secondary students, parents and business community, recent graduates, and staff) are included. The third document contains the notes of the 13 public meetings that were held by the Task Force in order to allow further public input. (DB)

ED352304

Decisions for a Decade: Task Force Report and Recommendations
Appendixes A & B

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL
IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN
GRANTED BY

L.
CARE FOOT

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

50 022 680



**Decisions
for
a
Decade**

**TASK FORCE REPORT
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**School District 68 (Nanaimo)
June 1991**



**Decisions
for
a
Decade**

**TASK FORCE REPORT
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

**School District 68 (Nanaimo)
June 1991**



DECISIONS
FOR
A
DECADE

About the Logo

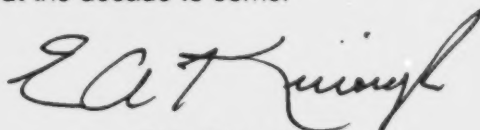
A stylized "1" has been placed upon a "0" to represent the 10-year period focused upon in this planning report. The "1" also represents the uniqueness and centrality of the individual, especially the student, in our complex society; the "0", the global community in which we now live, as well as holistic learning or the interconnected whole which now is greater than the sum of all parts. The logo also symbolizes cell division, reminding us of our embryonic state and of the growing and developing we must experience to mature in our bio-technical world of tomorrow.

On closer examination the logo is a "D", and a reflected or mirror image of that "D" representing the Task Force's charge to propose "Decisions for a Decade." Most important, we are reminded that to accomplish change we must reflect upon where we have come from, where we presently are and where we intend to go—the essence of strategic planning.

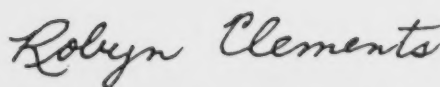
To the Board of School Trustees,
School District 68 (Nanaimo):

On behalf of the Decisions for a Decade Task Force,
we take pleasure in submitting this report to the Board
of School Trustees.

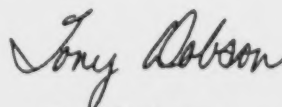
We are confident the decision to implement the
report's recommendations in the manner envisaged
will permit this school district to experience greatness
throughout the decade to come.



E.A. Killough



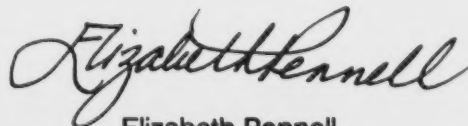
Robyn Clements



Tony Dobson



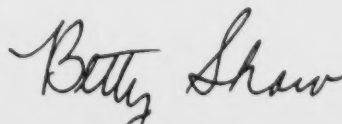
George Duffell



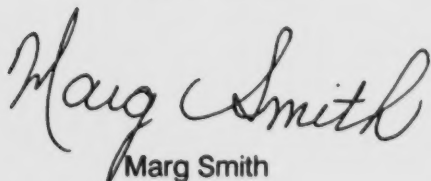
Elizabeth Pennell



Donna Reimer



Betty Shaw



Marg Smith



Dave Williamson

**This report is dedicated
to the students of
School District 68 — past,
present and future.**

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
A Special Acknowledgement	3
Task Force Membership	4
About Decisions for a Decade	7
The Challenge to Change	11
The Students	23
Personnel Resources	25
Program Resources	33
Material Resources	37
Community Resources	41
Planning for Change	45
Selected References	51

Acknowledgements

Decisions for a Decade was fueled almost exclusively by hundreds of hours of thoughtful, enthusiastic leadership and participation by determined, dedicated volunteers. These wonderful, service-minded persons, each with a commitment to education, a passion for children, and unshakeable optimism about our capacity to positively influence tomorrow's world, came from all components of School District 68, and from its wealth of diverse community voices. Although it is not possible to acknowledge the contributions of everyone, a number merit special mention:

- all those who served as members of the Decisions for a Decade Task Force, particularly the student participants, for their inspiration and service
- the chairpersons of the four standing committees –
George Duffell, Personnel Resources;
Elizabeth Pennell/Doug Sommers, Program Resources;
Dave Williamson, Material Resources;
Betty Shaw, Community Resources;
– without whose leadership and performance decisions would have taken decades
- the three research associates - Robyn Clements, Tony Dobson and Marg Smith, who not only blazed the trail but often carried much of the load as well. These teachers initially came to Decisions for a Decade in pursuit of field research credits towards their masters degrees, and became among the most enthusiastic and valued of the Task Force and committee members. They remained full participants to the end, long after fulfilling their university requirements.
- Jennifer McNeil, Project Secretary, for her services far beyond the call of duty and, especially, for her contagious excitement and enthusiasm for Decisions for a Decade
- Donna Reimer, Communications Officer, for her capable publicity of the project and editing of this report
- Gerald Fallon, Director of Instruction, for his research on educational paradigms
- Al Balanuik, Director of Instruction, for his work on the Decisions for a Decade logo design
- Gerry Howell, Printer/Graphics Technician, Phyllis Cassell, Photocopy and Dispatch Clerk and the word processing department for their assistance in reproduction of survey materials and for expert completion of various assignments while confronted with tight timelines
- the Parents' Advisory Council chairpersons and school principals who hosted the nine zone meetings held at:
Ladysmith Primary,
Joan May, Al Cormons;
Woodbank Elementary,
Peter Grover -Principal;
North Cedar Elementary,
Cindy Pieschel, John Buckner;
John Barsby Secondary,
Carolyn Iles, Bruce Mitchell;
Nanaimo District Secondary,
Bruce Ryder -PAC;
Pauline Haarer Elementary,
Charlotte Richardson, Terry Green;
Forest Park Elementary,
Dorrie Roberts, Pene Jesske;
Rock City Elementary,
Ian Marr, George Duffell;
Rutherford Elementary,
Rob Michieli/Patti Spencer,
Ron Sandland

- Rich Johnston, President of Malaspina College, for his generous assistance with research materials
 - The Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce for its assistance in involving the business and professional community
 - Russ Greaves of Shaw Cable Community Television for his production of the Decisions for a Decade video, *Na-Naim-Lay-Dee*.
 - Alisa, Dara and Vanessa Greaves for their artwork used in the production of *Na-Naim-Lay-Dee*.
 - John Godfreyson and Erik Warners for their advice and technical support on the video
 - the symposium resource persons, who prepared and hopefully still will have an opportunity to share with us their experiences and expertise on change
 - Dr. Donna VanSant, Research Officer, Surrey School District, for her inspired assistance throughout
 - Dr. Allan Newberry, Executive Director, B.C. School Trustees' Association for his contribution to the strategic planning workshop
 - Dr. Anne Davies, Planning Facilitator of Curriculum and Instructional Services, Greater Victoria School District, for her assistance with the concept of strategic planning
 - Tom Harris, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Coquitlam, for his advice and shared information
 - Dr. Ray Williams, then Assistant Superintendent of Schools for North Vancouver School District, for his excellent material support and advice on the project
 - The Ministry of Education, and especially Dr. Graham Dixon, Assistant Director, Information Management Branch, for active interest and support, as well as partial funding as a Key Indicators Project
 - Dr. Ray Latta, Director, ARP International Administrative Programs, San Diego State University, for support of the project through field credits for research associates completing graduate degrees
 - the many students of Nanaimo School District who overwhelmed the Task Force and its committees with their enthusiasm, creativity, commitment and understanding
- The Task Force also acknowledges R.A. Malatest and Associates Ltd., Victoria, for the excellent quality of consulting services, as well as for the professional manner in which these were provided.
- Finally, the Task Force wishes to acknowledge the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Ross White and the Board of School Trustees for their original vision and continued interest and support for Decisions for a Decade.

E.A. (Ted) Killough
Project Director
Decisions for a Decade

A Special Acknowledgement

Throughout the activity time of the Decisions for a Decade Task Force, the individuals most closely involved with the project, members of the Steering Committee, became a very close-knit team. The steadying voice and quiet closures of Ted Killough ("I have just one more thing to say before moving on") usually kept the committee on track. On occasion he reminded members of the central issue at hand — improving education for students.

Ted's role as Project Director to Decisions for a Decade and the demands of the other aspects of his job within the district finally led to physical signals which made it imperative for him to slow down. With George Duffell stepping in to handle the chairing responsibilities, the work of the Task Force continued smoothly despite Ted's enforced respite.

The members of the Steering Committee were pleased to welcome Ted back to his position as Project Director and would like to thank him for his visionary and enthusiastic leadership, and for his continuing commitment on behalf of the students of this district.

Steering Committee
Decisions for a Decade

Task Force Membership

Steering Committee

Ted Killough
Project Director
(Director of Instruction)

Robyn Clements
Research Associate
(Teacher)

Tony Dobson
Research Associate
(Teacher)

George Duffell
Chairperson, Personnel Resources
(Nanaimo School Administrators' Assoc.)

Gerald Fallon
Research Associate
(Director of Instruction)

June Harrison
Board of Trustees

Jennifer McNeil
Project Secretary
(Communications Department)

Elizabeth Pennell
Chairperson, Program Resources
(Nanaimo District Teachers' Assoc.)

Donna Reimer
Communications Officer

Betty Shaw
Chairperson, Community Resources
(Parents' Advisory Council)

Marg Smith
Research Associate
(Primary Program Implementation Teacher)

Doug Sommers
Chairperson, Program Resources
(Nanaimo District Teachers' Assoc.)

Dave Williamson
Chairperson, Material Resources
(Director of Purchasing)

Personnel Resources Committee

George Duffell
Chairperson

Moya Byrne
Student, Ladysmith Secondary

Robyn Clements
Teacher, Dufferin Crescent Elementary

Doug McBride
Coast Personnel Services Ltd.

Gail McGillivray
Canadian Union of Public Employees

Jack Perry
MacMillan Bloedel Ltd.

Christy Roberts
Student, Nanaimo District Secondary

Program Resources Committee

Elizabeth Pennell
Chairperson (January 1991 - present)

Doug Sommers
Chairperson (March 1990 - January 1991)

Lisa Agnew
Student, Vocational Adult Secondary
Training Centre

Nancy Axford
Teacher, Rock City Elementary

Tom Benjamin
Canada Employment & Immigration

Val Cooke
Intermediate Program Implementation

Lynda Duncan
Student, Wellington Secondary

Lauren Linden
Canada Employment & Immigration

Jamie Reimer
Student - Nanaimo District Secondary

Dolly Robertson-Reiser
Nanaimo/Duncan District Labour Council

Stephen Sims
Teacher, Wellington Secondary

Marg Smith
Primary Program Implementation

Roberta Wicker
Student, Vocational Adult Secondary
Training Centre

Material Resources Committee

Dave Williamson
Chairperson
Gillian Bledsoe
Student, Vocational Adult Secondary
Training Centre
Jim Browne
Student, Vocational Adult Secondary
Training Centre
Tony Dobson
Research Associate and
Teacher, Vocational Adult Secondary
Training Centre
Czarina Gutierrez
Student, Woodlands Secondary
Ernie Levesque
City of Nanaimo
Dave Sawbridge
Computer Resource Teacher

Community Resources Committee

Betty Shaw
Chairperson
Jim Baxter
Malaspina College
Mike Bortolotto
Nanaimo and Region Resource Centre for
Independent Living
Allison Cutler
Central Vancouver Health Unit
Jennifer Lynch
Student, John Barsby Secondary
Fred McCreath
Nanaimo Home Builders' Assoc.
Betty Nickull
Senior Citizens Representative
Donna Reimer
Communications Officer
Joan Roberts
Student, John Barsby Secondary
Len Rowantree
Malaspina College
Bonnie Stuart
Student, Nanaimo District Secondary
Karla Wiebe
Student, Nanaimo District Secondary

About Decisions for a Decade

In the early autumn of 1989, the Board of Trustees, School District 68 (Nanaimo) committed the district to the development of a process for managing change. In response to a paper presented by the Superintendent of Schools, the Board established a Task Force entitled Decisions for a Decade, and gave it the mandate:

To examine the needs of School District 68 to ensure that proposals are in place to offer an education program that will meet the requirements of the students and community for the next decade.

The Board wanted the Task Force membership to be representative of the education system and the community. The Task Force was to seek broadly-based information by holding public hearings, making school visits, conducting interviews and hearing briefs. Although the central focus throughout all these activities was to be the educational requirements of students, the requirements of the community were to be studied as well.

In mid-November 1989 a new school district staff member was appointed, with his responsibilities including that of project director for Decisions for a Decade. Following initial research, including consultations with several other school districts, the project director submitted a proposal. This project design was based on several key assumptions about planning in education:

- Students are central to all educational planning.
- Planning requires broad participation and involvement by all those affected.
- In planning, the process is as important as the end product.
- Planning needs to be continuous rather than a one-time event.
- Plans must be put into action.

Task Force

In line with the first three of these assumptions, early in 1990 a broadly-based Task Force was appointed including representatives of internal groups (current students, teachers, non-teaching personnel, principals, management staff and trustees); and external communities (such as recent students, parents, business and industry, Malaspina College, public service, civic groups and organized labour).

The following was adopted by the Task Force as its statement of project purpose and intent (mission statement):

Through wide public involvement and consultation, to develop in Nanaimo School District a strategic plan which identifies the present state and future needs of the education system and to recommend strategies for policy development and implementation during the years ahead.

The following were confirmed as Task Force objectives and proposed operating procedures:

The Task Force, Decisions for a Decade, shall present to the Board of School Trustees, by the fall of 1991, a strategic plan containing written recommendations for the next ten years. These recommendations shall be used by the Board to assist in planning for the future of education in Nanaimo. These recommendations shall be determined by seeking input from:

- a) students, parents and guardians from School District 68*
- b) employees of School District 68*
- c) members of the communities served by School District 68*
- d) the public and private sectors of School District 68*

The recommendations shall be based on information received by

- a) determining the local educational vision for the future;*
- b) examining the current local educational system;*
- c) gathering data on local trends and projections;*
- d) comparing local trends with trends recognized in other jurisdictions*

Resources Committees

In order to make the volume of work manageable, the Task Force was organized into four standing committees with the work assigned according to topics. Task Force membership was assigned to committees in such a way as to ensure balance and varied representation. Because their voices were considered to be particularly important, student members were placed on all four committees. Chairpersons were named by designated organizations to preside over the committees, and the responsibilities of each committee were outlined.

Personnel Resources Committee

Chairperson named by the Nanaimo School Administrators Association – Projecting personnel needs, recruiting, selecting and assigning employees, staff development and in-service training; motivation; job satisfaction; personnel supervision and evaluation; labour relations.

Program Resources Committee

Chairperson named by the Nanaimo District Teachers' Association – Education program issues such as curriculum; student services; skills and attitudes; student assessment; day care; instructional support; instructional practices; programs in the community.

Material Resources Committee

Chairperson named from District Administration Group – Capital assets, finance, and related matters including school sites; facilities; equipment, materials and supplies; budgeting; demographics, school

organization and size; system structuring; payroll; purchasing; data and information systems.

Community Resources Committee

Chairperson named by the School Liaison Committee/Parent Advisory Council Federation – School/community interaction and expectations, including recreation and leisure time issues; school/community relations; school/college matters; continuing education; the environment; the world of work; and other aspects of life outside and beyond school.

Each of the four standing committees undertook to perform three major tasks:

- Define and describe the present situation within that area, including identification of both the strengths and weaknesses of the system. This commitment included collecting and analyzing information required to develop recommendations.
- Develop a vision for the future from the perspective of the committee's area of responsibility. This process required researching and analyzing futures information, data on economic, social and demographic projections, and theory and practices in contemporary education.
- Prepare recommendations and rationale statements.

Steering Committee

A Steering Committee was also established and given three functions:

- Overall project design, planning and coordination of Decisions for a Decade on behalf of the Task Force;
- Publicity, communications and logistics with respect to the project;

I am not confident of the usefulness of this survey. Is anyone going to care or listen to the results?

—Staff
Member

I am glad you take kids' opinions.

—Elementary
Student

It was my pleasure to do this questionnaire. I wish we could communicate in this fashion more often.

—Secondary
Parent

- Coordinating project research, data and information-gathering and analyses, and report writing and editing.

Project Activities

The work of the Task Force and its committees was conducted over several distinct phases.

The first phase of approximately four months was largely concerned with appointing members, holding initial meetings, determining terms of reference and objectives, establishing operating procedures, making initial contacts with other groups and starting preliminary research.

Data Gathering

During phase two, the Task Force decided on its information and data needs, and spent many hours developing and refining its data-gathering methods.

The most important method for obtaining direct input was through seven surveys, developed, field-tested and administered in the fall of 1990 with the assistance of a professional consulting firm with extensive related experience. In total, some 4,800 individuals were surveyed by telephone or mail to obtain a broad sampling of current opinions about education in School District 68.

Those surveyed included the general public (parents and non-parents), business and professional organizations, recent grade 12 students, elementary students, secondary students, parents, and all employees of the school district (teachers, support staff and administration). A sample of instructional staff also was surveyed to ascertain their opinion about curriculum issues and to gather information on expectations for the educational future. All surveys were

professionally tabulated and their results independently analyzed during early 1991.

The opinions found in the margins of this report were selected from the approximately 3,000 comments that those surveyed took the time to add to their questionnaires.

Another source of direct public input was a series of 13 public meetings. Nine meetings for the general public were held in the zones of the school district. In addition, special meetings were held with elementary students, secondary students, senior citizens and members of the Task Force. At the meetings, there was an explanation of the project by trustee representatives and by Task Force members and a video on educational change which was produced by the Steering Committee, assisted by community television. Those attending these public meetings were then asked to list perceived strengths and weaknesses of the current school system and proposed directions and priorities for the future. Those who attended provided a contagious enthusiasm for the project and its possible benefits for education locally.

In the spring of 1991, public hearings were held as a third means of obtaining public input. About 100 community organizations were invited by the Task Force to submit written and/or oral briefs. The labour problems then ongoing in the district may have discouraged some from taking advantage of this opportunity, but the calibre of presentations made contributed greatly to the Task Force's work of sampling community opinion and obtaining suggestions on education.

Analysis and Recommendations

The third phase of the Task Force's work was one of analyzing the information and ideas obtained locally and combining this background with other research results and external information to provide a basis for report conclusions and recommendations.

A parallel commitment was the development of adequate internal understanding of strategic planning.

The results of the surveys administered in November/December were professionally and independently tabulated and analyzed in January/February 1991. Information obtained from public meetings and hearings was processed and studied internally. Many also contributed by sharing the findings of related research literature, digesting pertinent legislation and directives and studying the plans and experiences of other school districts and organizations.

A number of additional initiatives were undertaken during phase three.

- In January 1991, a one-day workshop to develop a working understanding of strategic planning was held for the Steering Committee, school district senior management and trustees.
- An educational symposium was planned for the spring of 1991 but has been postponed. It was designed to scrutinize local perceptions and priorities in light of broader community, provincial and national/global social, economic and educational trends and directions but became an unfortunate casualty of labour unrest.
- During Spring Break, 1991 members of the Steering Committee held a three-day study session to analyze the data base and start preparation of report recommendations.
- The Steering Committee had an opportunity during a school board workshop in April 1991, to share results of the surveys, public meetings and public hearings with trustees and senior management.
- After extensive standing committee preparations, members of the Steering Committee held a "read-in" on May 17-18, 1991 to finalize proposed report recommendations and prepare the first draft of the report.
- These recommendations and the draft report were further revised and finalized by the Task Force meeting in early June 1991, before final editing and printing of the report.

The Challenge to Change

Coping with change effectively requires that we explicitly think and worry about the change process.

(Fullan, 1991)

Ours is a time of tumultuous change to our physical and human environments. We are altering the face of the earth, the water we drink, the food we eat and even the air we breathe. We probe the depths of our oceans, invade the far reaches of our universe, and explore the innermost secrets of life itself. The sweep of change is awesome, encompassing every facet of social, economic, political life.

How can we prepare ourselves and, more particularly, our children for the next decade and their entry into the 21st century? What will five-year-olds who are today entering school need when they graduate in the year 2003? What might they need for the year 2103, since we reasonably can expect that many of today's young children will live to see the 22nd century?

Education in the last decade of the twentieth century is facing the challenge of adapting to unprecedented alteration of human social and economic circumstances and conditions. As these trends lead to new directions in human thought, it is necessary for educational leaders to work to resolve issues and dilemmas arising out of new attitudes, opinions, wants and needs. The task of developing organizational action plans to maintain an advantage in these turbulent times requires the continual processes of environmental scanning, of recording the new realities and developing "anticipatory goals and strategies". (Banach, 1990).

Banach ponders the probability of the collapse of public education as it becomes overburdened with the "multiple needs of diverse constituencies". This produces an "overwhelming agenda - one which has led to dilution of purpose and distortion of focus."

Our schools are being asked to do too much for too many. ... "Education is the answer!" is society's response to every opportunity and the solution for every social ill. As the nature of change shifts direction and accelerates, expect the demands to increase.

Already our schools help parents by assuming roles which range from baby-sitting to the teaching of manners, morals and ethics. To help business, schools provide programs designed to enhance the quality of the workforce. To help politicians, they provide an educational batting average by testing progress on minimal objectives. And, to help non-parents and almost everyone else, they try to function on shoestring budgets.

(Banach, 1990)

The economic "Catch 22" for school boards stems from the dilemma of increasing costs in relationship to performance. If the education system is perceived to be failing in its task, then those who hold the purse strings may become increasingly reluctant to provide additional financial support. If standardized tests lead to the perception that the system is adequately doing its job, then there is a reluctance to increase the size of the budget since satisfactory performance in education is an acceptable goal. In all walks of life, however, people are urged to strive for excellence.

In addition, the reality of competition faces education in the coming years. Nations of Europe and the Pacific Rim are setting new standards in commitment to high achievement levels. To ensure that graduates stay competitive in a global economy, public education must strive for the highest standards of achievement. Otherwise, a growing number of organizations and enterprises will deliver a high standard of education to financially capable students or identified high

achievers. The public education system could thus become a social system without a future. The ability of the current system to maintain a competitive advantage lies in developing strategic planning which will ensure the provision of suitable and appropriate resources for the future.

The most important resource for the future is our citizens. The major challenge of any education system is to prepare individuals to fulfil their roles as citizens who will have the necessary abilities to set directions which meet the needs of a dynamic economy and progressive society. Meeting this challenge requires endorsement of society's goals in intellectual development, in human and social development and in career development.

According to the B.C. Ministry of Education, the prime goal of the public schools should be intellectual development:

- to develop in students the ability to analyze critically, reason and think independently, and acquire basic learning skills and bodies of knowledge;
- to develop in students a lifelong appreciation of learning, a curiosity about the world around them and a capacity for creative thought and expression.

The schools, the family and the community share in the goals of human and social development:

- to develop in students a sense of self-worth and personal initiative;
- to develop an appreciation of the fine arts and an understanding of cultural heritage;
- to develop an understanding of the importance of physical health and well-being;

- to develop a sense of social responsibility, and a tolerance and respect for the ideals and beliefs of others;

and in career development:

- to prepare students to attain their career and occupational objectives;
- to assist in the development of effective work habits and the flexibility to deal with change in the workplace.

(Ministry of Education, 1990)

The challenge for society and its education systems is to determine the ultimate qualities of the educated citizen and then to provide opportunities for all citizens to strive to reach those standards by means of lifelong education.

Global Perspective

World societies are evolving as they struggle through major shifts in direction towards new visions of reality. Changing technologies and communications are instrumental in the accelerating process of replacing the older ways of viewing the world. Holistic thinking and global solutions are beginning to address the problems arising out of the sixteenth and seventeenth century imperative which prescribed treatment of systems in isolation. Iron-fisted political systems and world conflicts cannot significantly slow the change process. Educational systems are undergoing massive world-wide re-evaluation and restructuring as they struggle to meet the changing needs of new decades. The evolution of a more healthy, holistic global society is the essence of the new paradigm which is beginning to replace the more mechanistic, nationalistic and isolationist paradigm of the past few centuries.

The Trends

As the world approaches the historically momentous occasion of the year 2000, the new millennium, there are many significant trends which are apparent. The task of many researchers and institutes is to define these trends and extrapolate possible futures from them. The constant theme in the trends literature is that of change, and the changes that would once likely have been localized by political or geographical barriers now radiate around the world in the historical equivalent of an instant.

Alvin Toffler described mankind as having progressed through 800 "lifetimes" each of 62 years duration in the last 50,000 years. The first 650 lifetimes were spent in caves; only in the last six lifetimes has mankind had the printed word and it is the last or eight hundredth lifetime that has produced the "overwhelming majority of all material goods we use in daily life today" (Toffler, 1970). The B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training concurs with this assessment of the accelerating pace of change. It estimates that "90 percent of all researchers are still productive", and that "half of the products and services of the year 2005 are still undeveloped." (Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training, 1990)

Such is the pace of change that Toffler, in his introduction, warns of the "perishability of fact" and points out that some of the printed material in his book will be obsolete when published. With this reservation he cautions that "readers, therefore, must concern themselves more and more with general theme rather than detail." This caution is even more appropriate twenty-one years later as trends are analyzed and committed to the printed page.

John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene have identified and classified ten trends in the best-seller *Megatrends 2000*:

1. *The Booming Global Economy of the 1990's:*

Prosperity will be the outcome as the new global economic forces of the world are "surging across national boundaries, resulting in more democracy, more freedom, more trade, more opportunity...". Global trade, finance and especially information and communication systems will continue to expand rapidly. World-wide free-trade is coming with the influence of the Pacific Rim being especially pronounced. More than 160 countries trade on a daily basis and this economic interdependence may well be the best defence against world conflict.

2. *A Renaissance in the Arts:*

As more time and money is available, there will be a greater interest in the arts which will replace sports as the primary leisure activity.

3. *The Emergence of Free-Market Socialism:*

This contradiction in terms is used to describe the dismantling of a classical socialist state and a typical welfare state in favour of the globalized market economy.

4. *Global Lifestyles and Cultural Nationalism:*

Increasing interest in experiencing cultural exchanges will be balanced with growing awareness of and demand for cultural identity and integrity.

5. *The Privatization of the Welfare State:*

The shift from centralized governmental control to individual empowerment matches the need to deliver economic assistance to individuals, not groups.

6. *The Rise of the Pacific Rim:*

The population centre of the world lies in the Asian side of the Pacific Rim. This is

giving rise to an exploding economic base and affluence and is paralleled by commitment to education.

7. *The Decade of Women in Leadership:*

Effective leadership traits of the new economic order are not the exclusive masculine domain any longer. Women will readily find a place in the middle and upper management levels of "information age" business.

8. *The Age of Biology:*

Biotechnology is about to become a new focus. Once the ethics of biological engineering are resolved, this science will lead humanity into new frontiers in health care, food production and artificial intelligence. This emerging discipline will bring even more dramatic changes in the next 25 years than computer technology caused in the last quarter century.

9. *The Religious Revival of the New Millennium:*

Inner relief from accelerated change and the approach of the mystical millennium are causing a revival of spiritual interest and participation.

10. *The Triumph of the Individual:*

Individuals have the power to challenge and change the trends. Consumer power can affect economies. The new order will be linked communities which recognize and honor the participation of the individuals.

(Naisbitt, Aburdene, 1990)

Globalization of society is the outcome of the new world economy. Technological changes will facilitate this process through communication. Information access will increasingly ensure that the populace will be made aware of, if not experience, the major trends.

The North American Educational Perspective

William J. Cook Jr. outlines "four kinds of change irresistibly and traumatically affecting public education in America - demographics, economic transitions, transformation of mainstream values, competition". (Cook, 1988) The fabric of North American society itself is undergoing fundamental alteration: in cultural, social and family structures, in moral and ethical values, and in economic realities. The pace and scope of the changes are staggering to contemplate, and the resulting public concern has focused primarily on education - its relevance, its cost, its function and its future.

This concern has led to a variety of attempts to "restructure" the existing education systems to meet the changing needs of the new order. There is some concern that vast amounts of money may have been spent to produce little in the way of discernible outcomes as measured by international standards of achievement tests. These show North American students in general, and American students in particular, to be behind standards achieved by students in other Pacific Rim nations such as Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

The failure of the education system to adapt to a changing economic and social reality is having a disastrous effect on the North American economy. The social cost of support for the drop-outs who leave school, many with inadequate reading and math skills, and many more without adequate preparation for changing needs of business is extremely high. James J. Higgins reports in *Business Week* in December, 1990 that in the U.S.:

Twenty-six percent of our young people drop out before finishing high school. (The drop-out rate for Japan is 4 percent to 6 percent.) The system graduates an additional 700,000 students each year

who cannot read their diplomas. The costs of compensatory programs from federal, state, and local governments as well as charitable organizations is incalculable, and detracts mightily from the nation's gross national product.

(Higgins, 1990)

Complacency in Canada is inappropriate for the situation is equally disturbing. While schools seem to be doing an adequate job, there is concern about the numbers of students who do not manage to meet graduation requirements. Although Employment and Immigration Canada reports that 70 percent of high school students currently reach graduation as compared to only 30 percent in the 1950's, there is the stark reality of growing numbers of dropouts.

...As we begin the 1990's, nearly 100,000 Canadian young people are still dropping out of high school every year. Many of them are functionally illiterate. Many will be marginalized. Canada will be left with the resulting social costs and a shortfall in the skills our economy urgently needs. With a national average dropout rate of something like 30 percent, the 1990's could see as many as one million under-educated untrained youth trying to enter a labour market that increasingly won't want them.

(Employment and Immigration
Canada, 1990)

This concern was echoed by the Minister of Education in British Columbia in May of 1991 in the budget debate when he identified illiteracy rate and school dropout rate as "two of the primary objectives (which) must be addressed, not only for the people who will be helped but for what it means for economic growth." (Hagen, 1991).

Education is the key to the economic and social health of our society. Competition

and technological innovation have created intense demands on the workforce, yet "one of the biggest impediments to our future economic health is the mismatch between the kinds of jobs the economy is creating and the qualifications of those available to fill them." (Palazzi, 1989)

Businesses, too, pay a high price to compensate for the short-comings of the education system.

Each year, to train and upgrade workers, business spends approximately \$250 billion - an amount comparable to the annual expenditure on U.S. public elementary and secondary education. ... Moreover, as much as \$25 billion of the private sector budget is earmarked for remedial education, and that number is increasing.

(Higgins, 1990)

A Canadian business executive, John H. Farrell of the Ottawa-Carlton Learning Foundation, believes that "industry support of excellence in education is one of the most important endeavors we can undertake." He contends that "by 2000, 40 percent (compared to 24 percent today) of the new jobs in this country will be highly skilled, requiring solid reading, computing and thinking skills. He predicts that "many of the new jobs will demand more than 17 years of education and training." (Farrell, 1990)

For the 1990's and beyond, there will be a dramatic increase in the need for employees who have the ability to continue to learn. The education system must be prepared to teach students of all ages how to learn for they must have the skills to adapt to tremendous amounts of new information. "Because it is impossible to predict what skills will be needed, the worker who succeeds will be the one who can study, think independently, and learn quickly." (Education Leader, December, 1990)

Technology

Through continued development and application of new sophisticated technologies, expansion of knowledge will continue at a pace unprecedented in mankind's history. It has been estimated that in the past the total body of knowledge possessed by mankind would double every few thousand years, but at the present accelerated pace at which knowledge is acquired, mankind doubles its knowledge base every year or so.

Whereas *Megatrends 2000* foresees increasing power of the individual through growing consumer awareness and the demand for cultural exchange, this can only occur by reducing isolation of the individual by technological means. Telephones, radios and televisions, the information technologies of the third quarter of the 20th century have been surpassed. Although rapid change may initially lead to increased feelings of alienation, more than 75 percent of U.S. businessmen and 60 percent of U.S. homes with computers will have modems in the 1990's, allowing them to link their computers to the world's telecommunications systems. In addition, the explosive economic impact of the FAX machine is a very solid demonstration of the world's phenomenal need for rapid text/graphics transfer and interaction systems.

Mass media will influence and shape attitudes and values on an accelerating basis. Parents, schools and churches no longer will hold monopoly over the values and ideas of the young. The Information Age has replaced the Industrial Age. (Toffler, 1980) The technical ability to process, store and access information is multiplying daily. It is now possible, for example, to gain a competitive advantage via computer access of new research information months before it is available in print form.

Technology and Education

Increasingly, the home will become the place "to learn and to earn". New values of the computer literate young people will replace those of their parents who were imprinted with the notions and standards of an earlier television age. This same "high tech" literacy will enable greater numbers of our population to either finish or continue their education and carry out their employment responsibilities while utilizing technologies in their own homes.

Educational institutions are increasingly playing a catch-up game to bring their delivery systems in line with 21st century needs. Because education tends to be very conservative and tradition oriented, the education sector is significantly behind the business sector in embracing the technological revolution. While the restructuring campaigns and expenditures of the 1980's have been largely aimed at the productivity of the classroom learners, changes were devoted to improving the facilities, teachers, books and tests rather than investment in information age technology.

The reason for education's inefficiency, while rarely mentioned in the "reform" debate, is glaringly clear: Total capital investment - what buys technology - is only about \$100 per worker in schools compared with \$50 000 per employee in the average U.S. business and \$100 000 or more for each worker in many high-tech firms. Of roughly \$5 000 the U.S. spends annually for each student in public schools, only about \$100 to \$200 typically is spent on hands-on learning tools and materials for students.

(Perelman, 1990)

The growing trend in an age of information will more and more locate the classroom where the technology is found. Cable television and the knowledge or educational networks found in the home are a part of this, but even more important is the fact that Americans put to use 45 million personal computers during the last decade (a \$20 billion-a-year industry) while "U.S. schools acquired a mere \$2 billion worth of PC's." Perelman points out that "over 20 years of research shows that computer-based instruction produces at least 30 percent more learning in 40 percent less time at 30 percent less cost". (Perelman, 1990).

James A. Mecklenburger writes in *Kappan* (October, 1990):

...students can plug into learning whether at home, at school, or in the library. In short, as new technologies are applied to education on a large scale, much of what we call the "real world" (meaning the world outside of school) can come into schools just as readily as it can come into any other place. Similarly, much of what we call the "school curriculum" can -and will- go anywhere. ... Education that relies on electronic learning is the future.

(Mecklenburger, 1990)

British Columbia Initiatives

In March of 1987, the British Columbia government initiated a Royal Commission to study provincial schools. Stated within the terms of reference was a reason for the task which maintains its validity four years later:

British Columbia today faces unprecedented challenges as the result of fundamental economic and technological change. The government has concluded, therefore, that it is timely to clearly evaluate where we are going in education and to select the most appropriate and cost-effective means of meeting our objectives.

The Commission documented many of the social and economic trends which other researchers have described. These new realities create an imperative for educational revision in order to cope with the new demands and expectations being placed upon the system.

These changes include an explosion in knowledge, coupled with powerful new communication and information processing technologies. The structure of the economy is shifting from being primarily resource-based to becoming a mixed economy with increasing emphasis on the information and service sectors. Society itself is changing and becoming more diverse. An increasing variety of ethnic groups is represented, family structures are changing, the role of women in society is being redefined, and the age structure of the population is altering as older citizens make up an increasing percentage of society.

In more specific terms, the Commission reported on ten societal changes that have occurred over the last thirty years since the last major review of public education was undertaken. While most are global in scope, a few are specifically related to the British Columbian perspective:

The population of B.C. has long been characterized by cultural, racial, and linguistic diversity, and that diversity is now greater than ever.

Protection of the natural environment has become a major economic and political issue.

There are fewer jobs in traditional resource industries in B.C.; most of the jobs that do remain call for higher levels of education and training than before.

The Commission also found that the school system was not fulfilling its task as well for those who do not go on to further education as it was for those who plan to attend post-secondary institutions.

The school system is not equipping graduates with the skills they need in the job market. The Commission found the dropout rate "disturbingly high."

As a result of the findings, the Commission outlined four reasons for making changes to the education system:

1. *We need to adapt to, and benefit from, significant social and economic changes in B.C. and the world.*
2. *We need to encourage more graduates to go on to further education.*
3. *We need to make sure that graduates who don't go on to further education are better equipped to enter the workforce.*
4. *We need to encourage all students to graduate, thus significantly reducing the dropout rate.*

(Sullivan, 1988)

The 83 recommendations arising out of the research provided the framework for developing a new approach to education which is intended to lead to a more successful lifelong journey in learning.

The Community Perspective

The communities of School District 68 share a rich historical heritage, and will participate in an exciting voyage into the twenty-first century. While these aspects of commonality will provide for singleness in community focus, at the same time it is important to maintain awareness of the cultural differences resulting from the unique nature of each of the member communities. However, the district is a part of the global village, and global trends become significant as their effects are seen to apply locally. The communities which make up the school district have their unique niche in the emerging megatrends, and some general tendencies emerge as the local situation is viewed in the wider global context.

The district has seen the recent emergence of diversity of family structures and life-styles. Single parent, non-married nuclear families are the trend. There is rapid growth in the need for daycare and for other "family" support systems.

There has been an increasing rate of population growth in Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District. Affordable housing is attracting first-time home-buyers and retirees to Nanaimo and Ladysmith. Population pressure is generating demand for renovated and new school facilities, but at the same time, the district now has a growing proportion of taxpayers who do not have school-age children.

The changing role of women has ensured that their involvement and influence in all spheres of society is dramatically on the rise. Participation rates for women in the workforce have increased significantly. As a result, women have accounted for two-thirds or roughly 200,000 of the 300,000 jobs created in B.C. in the last ten years. Leadership roles are increasingly being assumed by women. (Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology, 1990)

The district is experiencing similar population and demographic alterations to those that are taking place in other population centres of B.C. There are major shifts in age structures and composition of our population as the "baby boom" generation matures, the proportion of elderly increases, and the ethnic diversity of our population grows. English as a second language curricular requirements reflect an expanding linguistic diversity and multi-cultural growth dimension.

Recent surveys in the Regional District by Nanaimo Family Life Association (NFLA) (1989) and the Community Futures Committee (CFC) (1988) give important information which provides some specific local demographic, economic and social descriptions and trends.

Our society has changed. Is there an understanding of this change? We have much to do in the final decade of the 20th century.

— Teacher

The Nanaimo Family Life Association survey identified the following commonly reported areas of needs:

- more services for youth, particularly programs that address alcohol/drug issues, life skills and job skills.
- the types of counselling issues that clients most frequently present pertain to personal issues such as self-esteem, assertiveness, anxiety, depression, family dysfunction and relationships.
- more programs and services for the elderly.

(NFLA, 1989)

While the majority of the population is between the ages of 24 and 74, (51.6 percent) there is an increasing senior population which will have a major impact on the economy, the health care system and the education system.

Economic Future of the Area

The Central Island Futures Committee reported in 1988 that the worst of the unemployment situation of the early 1980's was over, and that unemployment rates would decline. However, the Nanaimo Family Life Association 1989 Community Survey stated that unemployment remained high at over 10 percent in the following occupations: clerical, construction, service occupations, fishing/hunting, and sales occupations.

The demographic forecasts predict that the rate of employment growth would exceed the rate of growth of the labour force for at least the next ten years. It is likely that the "goods producing" sector will likely see decreasing employment while the service industry continues to grow. There will be more likelihood of employment as clerks and assistants than as mill workers. The CFC

report adds that there will be a "host of part-time and full-time jobs in the service sector which will require minimal entry-level skills." The NFLA report adds that there will be more women in the work force.

In the new economic realities forecast by the CFC, there will be an easier transition for "youth since they normally have the education, and personal circumstances, that allows them to learn new skills more quickly and to be more mobile and flexible within the labour force itself."

The major employment sector in the next decade will likely arise from the economic strength of the tourist industry and the impact of the growing retirement community and its specific needs. The growth of these two sectors will lead to an "increased demand for personal services and increased interest in cultural activities."

This shift in economic emphasis to the service sector has already resulted in an increase in the number of part-time jobs and this trend will continue in the foreseeable future.

There will likely be an ongoing increase in small businesses and entrepreneurial activities, but competition from the third world and its ability to produce goods at a lower cost will result in turning more frequently to the marketing of technical skills and knowledge rather than physical goods.

The District Perspective

Major planning must take place to ensure that the local educational system is prepared for the impacts of new global realities and dynamics, and the more immediate impacts of the changing community as it enters a new millennium. The provincial government has set new directions for education which follow "a philosophy that is very different from the one under which most of us were educated." (School District 68 Annual

Staff and students in a changing society and community such as ours need stability. I do not think we should change for the sake of change. There are a lot of good things happening in the school district.

— Teacher

Report, 1990) The School District is on schedule with the process of implementing these major alterations to the education system through the initiatives begun by the provincial Ministry of Education in the document *Year 2000: A Framework for Learning*. The invitation to participate is out:

...School District 68 is seeking as much public and parent participation as possible in planning the new programs over the next several years.

(Annual Report, 1990)

Attempting to study and understand a field as complex as public education in a large school district is a challenge. Such an undertaking is particularly difficult during a period of rapid internal and external change when new directions and expectations are emerging. Accelerated change on all fronts is exactly what now is being experienced in British Columbia and throughout this school district.

During the next decade social, economic and educational changes in our area may exceed those of the previous fifty years. At the same time there is a desire to preserve those characteristics of our community, its lifestyle and its educational system, which contribute so much to the area's present uniqueness, appeal and success.

The Decisions for a Decade Task Force recognizes that the process of change has been ongoing even while this report was being prepared. The Task Force is reassured, however, that the diversity of its membership, the extent and variety of its information-gathering procedures, and, especially the involvement and participation of many in its work have given the Task Force a good understanding of what the public education in this school district presently is and is perceived to be, and how major change may impact upon tomorrow's educational needs. The conclusions and

recommendations of this report arise out of this understanding.

The Task Force identified a number of common themes or strands, which relate to an entire segment of school district functioning and are presented as follows.

When Will Our Students Learn?

Traditionally, time has always controlled the provision and availability of public education. Schools operated from September until June, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.; from grades 1 through 12. These limitations of time are becoming less relevant for education, just as they are for other social and economic endeavours. The need for availability of education transcends these barriers of time; increasingly there are others who are prepared to respond to these needs if public education in the school district fails to do so.

Where Will Our Students Learn?

Again, public education traditionally has been controlled by location, with students required to appear in person at a specific facility. Education now is becoming global in concept and delivery. Technology of the Information Age means that many locations outside of traditional school buildings may now need to become part of public education as defined by the school district.

Who Will Our Students Be? Who Will Enable them to Learn?

The school district will experience growing demands for added flexibility both in who constitutes our students and who works with those students. Changing times, and the need to change careers, means that students will need to be life-long learners and to have proficiency far beyond the levels demanded to date. The district will be expected to educate all students to graduation, rather than only two out of three; to educate all ages of students instead of only those within

As education is the most powerful tool in dealing with complex problems that assail us, we encourage you to continue to change the system to make it more relevant for children entering the 21st century.

*—Elementary
Parent*

... textbooks are a boring way to learn. We need a new radical approach to learning that is exciting, motivating and challenging.

*—Secondary
Parent*

of only those within a span of 12 years; to respond to the needs, interests and aspirations of all social, economic and cultural backgrounds. These changes will also challenge the district to be far more innovative as it plans who works with these students to enable them to learn.

What Will Our Students Learn?

The Year 2000 already has underscored that the focus of tomorrow's curriculum is how to think and learn rather than what to think. This concentration on critical and creative thinking instead of course content will mean dramatically different ways of organizing for learning to occur, enabling students to learn, and determining what learning has taken place.

How Will Change Affect Our Students and Their Learning?

Fundamental changes in how those in education prepare for the future, how they relate to one another, how they make decisions and how they communicate achievement of their purpose, will be the most immediate and profound of the challenges faced by the school district. The extent to which these challenges are being met ultimately will be measured by community support for what is being attained and, most importantly, by levels of student satisfaction and achievement.

The Students

Senior students are making the conscious decision to be in school and therefore, they should be allowed a greater amount of respect and freedom. As young adults, they are capable of making the choice that is right for them.

—Secondary Student

From the beginning, students have been the heart of Decisions for a Decade. The ultimate aim of the recommendations in this report is to ensure the district meets the educational needs of all students in our rapidly changing world.

Decisions for a Decade actively involved students in its gathering of information. As members of the Task Force, a group of secondary students developed many of the survey questions to which 1,278 of their peers responded, thus insuring that the issues important to them were addressed from their perspective. In addition they helped develop the survey to which 664 elementary students responded, and as members of the four sub-committees had input into all Decisions for a Decade surveys.

Students were encouraged to attend public zonal meetings along with parents and members of the community. They actively participated in the brainstorming of ideas and from their place within the system, offered a unique viewpoint about education of the future.

The quality of the responses from students attending the public meetings motivated the Steering Committee to plan additional forums for students only. To this end, five students from each secondary school attended a three-hour session where they contributed their ideas and voiced their concerns regarding education within the district.

Elementary schools were asked to select two students from each school's student council to represent the opinions of their peers at a similar forum. Once again the committee received information from an important perspective. Most of the students said it was their first opportunity to share their opinions and experiences in an accepting atmosphere. It was the general feeling of both groups that there should be formal, ongoing processes

throughout the district whereby student voices can continue to be heard.

There was an overwhelming request from students for an open real-life learning atmosphere and the opportunity to learn at their own rate. Secondary students expressed a strong desire to be taught with more of the same strategies such as active, hands-on learning, cooperative groupings, projects, experiments and field trips, than they had been exposed to in elementary school. As well, students were very clear in their need to be given more input, independence, and responsibility. They were definite in their demands to become active participants in the decision-making and goal-setting processes of their education.

Secondary students felt the need for balance in their education as indicated by their responses that skills in the areas of the "3R's", problem-solving, vocational/technical, and social/interpersonal were of almost equal value. Student comments from the survey clearly indicate their desire to be treated with respect. They also want recognition of their individuality and feel a need for increased privacy and confidentiality in their interactions with adults at school. They would like all teachers to have a humanistic approach and to know them as people. Students, particularly in grades 11 and 12, want to be afforded opportunities to demonstrate personal responsibility to better prepare them for their imminent adulthood.

Survey responses provided an in-depth look at students' attitudes and perceptions regarding their school environments. A relatively high percentage of both elementary (10.7 percent) and secondary (14.5 percent) students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "I feel safe at my school". Over 22 percent of elementary students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement "I like coming to school".

At the secondary level, in response to "My education is useful now and in the future", 26.6 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed.

These, and other negative responses, indicate that the student survey data, both statistics and comments, need to be further studied, assessed and acted upon.

It seems fitting to close this section on the students with the following quotations taken from a brief presented to Decisions for a Decade.

To our experience, smaller classes are better than large classes.

The teachers who listen to the students' needs are better than the ones who don't.

A teacher who makes school work interesting makes the student want to learn, and the teacher who likes what he is doing is more effective than the one who doesn't.

A teacher who is better trained in psychology, communication and stress management is more able to be caring and has less need to be controlling. This training (as well as training in meeting special needs such as learning disabilities) should be mandatory.

More money should become available for assessments, special needs help, teacher's aids and tutors.

Teachers should be screened well before being hired and monitored regularly during their teaching careers.

Communication is important between all partners and in an open system like this, the best interest of each child is foremost. Communicating encourages acceptance and understanding and does away with the need for damaging labelling.

My question is "Do you think it is worth having students drop out of school, or would you rather spend a little more money towards better education for your children?"

—Students of Literacy classes at Malaspina College

Personnel Resources

Never forget that it is people who teach and learn. New buildings, programs, or equipment won't "build" better people; only better people can do that. Hire high quality people throughout the system and support them, nurture them, keep expectations humane.

— Elementary
Parent

Education is a "people" enterprise — people working with, for, and on behalf of people. People involved in the education process include learners, teachers, administrators, trustees, parents, business individuals and groups and other community members and agencies.

In the course of its deliberations, the Decisions for a Decade Personnel Resources Committee became increasingly aware of the value placed by individuals within the school district upon the need to maintain personal contacts and clear channels of communication.

This desire runs as a common thread throughout the observations and recommendations which follow.

The following sub-headings were used to interpret collected research data:

- Staffing
- Personnel Needs
- Staff Development
- Evaluation
- Job Satisfaction
- Personal Well-Being
- Health and Safety
- Motivation
- Labour Relations
- Organizational Structure

Staffing

School district personnel have served the Nanaimo school system with distinction. The district has been well staffed using existing staffing procedures. However, the following refinements are recommended to these staffing procedures.

Recommendations

- 1 Seek additional ways in which to recruit the best possible employees into all positions in the school district.

The people within the Nanaimo school system represent the "heart and soul" of the system. Recruiting the best possible employees must be a considered goal at all times to avoid becoming complacent in this endeavour.

- 2 Continue to recruit personnel from diverse backgrounds.

Nanaimo's demographic/multicultural perspective is rapidly changing. The district needs to be pro-active in anticipation of the community's future needs.

- 3 Refine the new employee orientation to include
 - a) a tour of the school district
 - b) the assignment of a mentor

a) It is in the district's and individual employee's best interests to have employees possess a district perspective. Knowledge and information tend to foster patience and flexibility, qualities necessary for the good health of any organization.

b) An assigned mentor would serve as both an information source and source of support for individuals new to the system, until they develop their own support networks.

- 4 Initiate action in the development of programs related to employee training with Malaspina College.

Malaspina College is a primary community source of employee recruitment.

5 Recruit more First Nations employees.

It is important that people of First Nations descent be given increased opportunities within the school district, particularly in positions involving First Nations programs. This would not only provide role modelling for First Nations children but would improve general appreciation and understanding of First Nations people and their unique culture.

6 Strengthen employee involvement in the recruitment of employees.

Shared decision-making results in better decisions. Employee involvement in hiring of colleagues will make for stronger team-building and support networks.

7 Develop a criteria selection process for substitute teachers similar to that for regular staff.

A place on the substitute roster is a step towards a permanent teaching position.

8 Address gender equity in the recruitment, placement and promotion for all positions throughout the school district.

The district needs to continue toward achieving a gender balance within each employee group. Role models are particularly important for students who are making career choices; these should be found at all levels within the public education system.

Personnel Needs

School District 68 personnel were asked to comment upon their needs as they pertained to their individual positions.

Recommendations

9 Examine different methods of attaining optimum class sizes.

Smaller class size was the single most important issue of concern, not only to the district's teaching staff, but also to students and parents.

10 Staff classes in relation to class compositions and provide support for special needs children.

The number of special needs children in a class is significant in terms of classroom management and teacher preparation time. Where justified, classes containing special needs children should be smaller.

11 Reduce workload expectations for employees.

Workload expectations have increased in recent years, without corresponding increases in support services. Increased pressure is being voiced as an area of concern by all employee groups.

Staff Development

Given the changing times and rapid technological advances taking place in society, the process of staff development will be of major importance in the years ahead.

We feel strongly that the most effective way to improve the quality of students' education is to reduce class sizes.
—Elementary Parent

The class sizes should be smaller so the students can learn one on one with their teacher.
—Secondary Student

Recommendations

- 12 Give employees retraining opportunities.**

Both the system and employees benefit from the retraining of experienced employees.

- 13 Focus professional development activities for substitute teachers.**

Substitute teachers have an important and unique role in the school system. They meet challenges not experienced by regular teachers. Within the uniqueness of their role lies an unmet need for professional development activities designed specifically for them.

- 14 Invite non-teaching staff to participate in professional development activities where the topic is of interest to them or where their presence would benefit the well-being of the school or district.**

Non-teaching staff are important and valued members of school staffs. They need to be included in activities involving the setting of the cultural tone.

- 15 Develop school community history and profiles .**

It is important that staff understand and know the community in which they work (a tour of the community should be an expectation for all new staff to a school).

- 16 Ensure that district maintenance, school district administration office and support staff have their professional development needs addressed.**

Of all employee groups surveyed, these were the staff who were most dissatisfied with professional development opportunities.

- 17 Implement staff development programs at all schools and worksites, to meet the needs as identified by individual staffs.**

While district initiatives are important, the needs of individuals and staffs are best identified and met at the workplace level. There is a need for a more formalized process for identification of individual staff needs and also individual employee needs.

Evaluation

Evaluation of employee performance is essential to the well-being of any organization, a belief that was widely expressed.

It is logical that both employers and employees participate in the development of the evaluation process.

Recommendations

- 18 Establish models for employee evaluation using a cooperative approach.**

It is in everyone's best interest to monitor quality control of the school district.

Employees are expected to involve themselves in self-education on their own time. The district needs to encourage its employees to re-educate themselves. We can be and want to be the best.

—Staff Member

19 Include the following in all employee evaluation reports:

- a) strengths
- b) areas for improvement
- c) recommendations/directions
- d) a "self-evaluation" component
- e) a regular review process to assess progress towards meeting recommendations.

There are differences in terms of format and content in evaluation reports throughout the school district. Greater consistency is needed and, in particular, self-evaluation components need to be included, along with a review process.

20 Use experienced employees as mentors for employees requiring professional assistance.

Fair and reasonable practices insist that employees experiencing difficulties be given fair and just due process. The assistance of colleagues as well as supervisors during these times would enhance the process. This is already being done to some extent, but it needs to be formalized.

21 Develop an evaluation model for substitute teachers.

Teacher evaluations take place over an extended period of time. Substitute teachers are in schools for short periods of time. This presents a dilemma for both substitute teachers and for those who write reports.

22 Explore a process to allow for parent and student input in the evaluation of teachers.

Following discussions with students and parents, it is obvious that these groups would like to have more input into the evaluation process. Parents do presently have the opportunity to participate in the evaluation process of school-based administrators.

Job Satisfaction

Survey results show that School District 68 personnel are generally satisfied with the recognition and appreciation received for job performance and with the school district as an employer (80 percent satisfaction levels). While 80 percent satisfaction levels would appear to be acceptable in terms of comparisons with other school districts, a 20 percent dissatisfaction level generates the following recommendation.

Recommendation

23 Address the causes of job dissatisfaction amongst some School District 68 employees.

The worth of the individual within the system must be seen to be of value. A 20 percent job dissatisfaction level translates into 213 individuals (using a total of 1,064 survey respondents).

Personal Well-Being

The table on this page shows survey results of the levels of satisfaction/dissatisfaction for support given by the school district in times of personal and professional crisis.

Satisfaction levels are high, but dissatisfaction levels become significant when translated into numbers of employees.

**Satisfaction Levels with Support Received
(during times of personal/professional crisis)**

	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>#Personnel Dissatisfied</i>
Personal Crisis	91.1%	8.9%	95 of 1,064
Professional Crisis	84.5%	15.9%	165 of 1,064

No other factor will affect our children more than the person who is teaching them.

—Elementary Parent

There seems to be a lot of overall dissatisfaction within the school and district lately. It stems from really feeling the pressure of too many demands and requirements.
—Teacher

Adult politics should be removed from the school system, or their impact at least minimized.
—Business-person

As in other effective businesses, staffs and administrators should be trained to appreciate each others' skills, to use group processes for creative and democratic decision-making, problem-solving and conflict resolution.

—Staff Member

Recommendation

- 24 Determine and address the reasons for employee dissatisfaction with support given during times of crisis.**

Dissatisfied employees affect a significant number of students.

Health and Safety

Health and safety are of interest and importance to all employees. The school district is to be commended for its efforts in this area. Community input generated the following recommendations.

Recommendations

- 25 Continue to stress workplace safety and follow Workers' Compensation Board guidelines.**

These guidelines are sound and in the best interests of employer and employee.

- 26 Develop an initiative to increase the availability of health nurses in schools.**

Students, in particular, would like to see school nurses more accessible. Concern over lack of availability was voiced repeatedly.

Motivation

Motivation is a personal matter and as such, all employee groups need to be afforded the opportunity for input. Without this opportunity, district-initiated incentives will run the risk of being viewed as being manipulative or contrived.

Recommendations

- 27 Trustees, employees and possibly parents develop cooperatively a process for recognition of School District 68 teachers' efforts and contributions.**

Cooperative problem-solving in this area would generate a process supported by all interest groups.

Most people enjoy recognition for their efforts, but they do not all necessarily need public or universal recognition. The matter of motivation presents a challenge for everyone in the school system, as we all play a role in motivation of both ourselves and others.

Labour Relations

Much needs to be done in School District 68 to improve management/employee labour relations. It is time to thoroughly assess the state of health of management/employee relationships and work towards constructive problem-solving in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

Recommendations

- 28 A concerted effort be made by all parties to foster collaboration and consultation rather than confrontation in labour relations.**

In day-to-day problem-solving, the ideal outcome is a win-win resolution.

- 29 All those who are charged with the responsibility of resolving conflict and/or negotiating in School District 68 should possess formal training in anger-conflict management and in conflict resolution.**

All school district personnel would benefit from such professional development. (Clear winners and losers have no place in sound conflict resolution strategies.)

- 30 Investigate alternative methods of labour dispute resolution.**

Disruption of services can be a detriment to students' learning and generate ill will and

resentment within the system and community. The resulting loss of morale in a people-intensive enterprise is a serious matter.

31 Employer and employee representatives must model behaviour in public which is expected of students.

Public education attempts to develop in young people the qualities of cooperation, tolerance, flexibility and fair play. It is critical that all leaders in the system demonstrate these qualities. The students of the community deserve positive role modelling.

Organizational Structure

The personnel committee examined whether the current school district organizational structure supports student learning.

Recommendations

32 Establish ongoing forums for staff-parents-students to respond to educational decisions/matters at both the district and individual school levels.

The community is vocal in its desire to have greater input into the educational system.

33 Explore and pursue methods for decentralizing decision-making to the school or other operational unit level directly responsible and accountable for implementing that decision in accordance with policy.

At present many perceive our school district organization to be unduly hierarchal and closed with decisions emanating from "the top". Decisions made close to the action are more efficient and effective, increase employee commitment and enhance morale.

34 Determine and address the causes of dissatisfaction with the district's promotion and transfer policies.

The survey reported that 36.8 percent of employees are dissatisfied with the district's promotion policy and 42.9 percent dissatisfied with the district's transfer policy.

35 Develop a process for increased sharing of decision-making at appropriate levels.

The survey reported that 23.4 percent of employees are very dissatisfied with personal authority to initiate pertinent decisions.

36 Increase the district supplementary staffing component.

Schools vary according to their facilities, community demographics, skills possessed by staff, and other factors. Some flexibility in staffing would:

- a) recognize the unique nature and needs of schools and their communities;
- b) allow staffs to develop and implement "on-site" initiatives.

37 Respond to community interest in providing alternative access to education through more flexible scheduling arrangements.

For many reasons, some students find it difficult to attend school during traditional hours. An attempt should be made to increase instructional time flexibility to accommodate these students. The system should be prepared to change to adapt to the communities' needs.

We need a system where we can progress at our own rate, and finish early, or get help to finish on time.

— Secondary Student

**38 Investigate the issue of
extra-curricular activities.**

*I think that we
should have more
teachers helping
with after school
curriculum. I
know it is a lot of
work . . . but
maybe we could
ask college
students to
sponsor a team.*

*—Elementary
Student*

The district needs to be pro-active in dealing with this issue and a formal statement needs to be made regarding the legitimacy or otherwise of extra-curricular activities as part of the recognized school day. These activities are wide in scope and play a significant role in terms of school ethos and team spirit. Students request increased opportunities for participation.

Program Resources

Programs form the foundation of the educational community. The philosophy of the overall direction and purpose of education in the district is expressed and reflected in the programs that are available. It is through programs that skills and attitudes are developed.

The specific content of programs is determined in two ways. The *Year 2000* provides that 80 percent of curriculum is developed by the provincial Ministry of Education while 20 percent is developed locally. This offers school districts the opportunity to meet needs specific to the community.

As the committee examined the data related to the current status of programs, there were four key areas of emphasis that emerged.

- flexibility (learning strategies, student choice, instructional time)
- curriculum (subject variety, life-long learning skills)
- career awareness (partnerships, career planning)
- parents as partners (parenting programs, decision-making)

These four areas should be the focus for future planning.

Flexibility

Consultation with students as well as the community at large indicates a need for flexibility.

Recommendations

- 1 **Encourage more flexibility in the way students are taught at all levels of the system.**

The data from the community support these initiatives. Strategies that were frequently

discussed include cooperative learning, hands-on learning, individual and group projects, experiments, field trips, real life experiences.

- 2 **Give students more opportunities to become active participants in the decision-making and goal-setting processes.**

In both the surveys and student forums, students expressed a strong desire to participate. The development of social responsibility is a goal of the *Year 2000* programs and acknowledged in School District 68's philosophy.

- 3 **Allow schools in consultation with their staff, students and community to address the issue of flexible timetabling.**

This is an area of sensitivity and yet it is a topic that has been brought forward by many people. A greater variety in timetabling options at both the daily and yearly level was requested in public meetings and student forums.

It seems the time is right to give consideration to alternative ideas such as restructuring daily timetabling; school day (early closure); school year (quarter system; 3 months on, 1 off); evening classes/shift options.

Curriculum

Curriculum is the content and structure of the courses guided by the philosophy and goals of the educational system.

The mandate of the B.C. public school system states:

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and

Please inquire about the way student council is treated. The administration uses us more like a service club than a council representing students.

— Secondary Student

attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and prosperous and sustainable economy.

Recommendations

- 4 Provide access to a greater variety of courses for students.**

Individual needs of learners must be met. The community and students requested greater variety of courses at their own school or access to courses in place at other schools.

- 5 Ensure that re-entry policies are in place to allow access to regular classes by all students.**

Students currently involved in alternative class/school situations want to be able to move back into regular classes using courses for which they have obtained credit. Other students returning to school may also wish to access classes.

- 6 Work with all stakeholders to set common program priorities.**

Currently there is a discrepancy in the priorities of students, parents and staff. It seems appropriate that consideration be given to this area and that cooperative planning be used to determine direction. The following table from a Decisions for a Decade survey outlines these discrepancies.

Order of Priority

Secondary Students	Parents	Staff
1. Social Policies	Career/ Work Experience	Environmental Policies
2. Career/ Work Experience	Environmental Policies	Social Policies
3. Environmental Policies	Social Policies	Career/ Work Experience

Further discrepancies exist in the setting of the group/goal related to above-average skills. While parents, teachers, principals and other district staff rated "problem-solving" as the top priority of education, the community said the "3R's" should have the highest priority.

- 7 Give students credit for demonstrations of learning in other than standardized and prescribed ways.**

Learning based on individual needs requires options in addition to written tests and homework for student representation of learning and for evaluation and assessment of progress.

- 8 Allow students school credit for achievement in a recognized course or program outside the school curriculum.**

Many students are involved in a very high level of study in certified programs within the community and credit earned could be appropriately applied to their school program. As well, learning would not be repetitious and students could use this time to apply their efforts to other areas during school time.

I believe that instead of focusing on the "3R's" we should ensure that our children should be taught how to learn.
— Elementary Parent

There is a need for the "3R's" to be taught before anything else. The knowledge lacking in other areas should be dealt with after the "3R's" are understood.
— Business-person

The time is now to educate the community that school/education is much more sophisticated than the schools of the 50's. We need to address the new basics.

—Teacher

School was very good for further academic education but barely adequate for paid employment.

—Recent Graduate

- 9 Develop and implement programs which will enhance life-long learning skills:**

creative thinking
problem-solving
communication skills
research techniques

The information explosion has made it clear that simple acquiring of knowledge will not get us through. We need to know where to find knowledge, what to do with it and how to put it to best use.

Career Awareness

The future world of work will offer many new career choices to students. The traditional mode of a single life-long career is changing. Students graduating in the year 2000 may make several career choices in their lifetimes. It is our responsibility to ensure their readiness.

- 10 Ensure greater consistency at all levels in raising the awareness of students to the ever-changing world of work.**

It is important that students have opportunities to consider the wide variety of career options. The future world of work will require tolerance and flexibility in personal choice and understanding.

- 11 Examine the roots of parent and community dissatisfaction with vocational/technical skills and take appropriate action.**

Parents and community respondents to the surveys indicated that they were not satisfied with the level of vocational/technical skills of students.

- 12 Expand the work experience program to meet the needs of more students.**

The community, parents and students repeatedly requested more access to work experience opportunities.

Parents as Partners

The *School Act* and the *Year 2000* documents establish parents as partners in their children's education.

Recommendation

- 13 Develop strategies to support parents as partners in education.**

Parents requested input in the planning and decision-making process. Their commitment and involvement in their children's education is essential to the operation of schools and the development of programs that meet the needs of their children.

Material Resources

Students are learning in a cramped environment which does not help in the learning process.
— Secondary Student

The elements of education that the Material Resources Committee addressed were:

Buildings/Grounds
Equipment
Transportation
Environment
Funding

These components received considerable input because they are visible to all involved. It is in the area of material resources where significant cost savings of the planning process known as strategic planning will have a major impact.

Buildings/Grounds

The buildings and grounds of the school district vary in age from in excess of fifty years to one year. This diversity, along with population shifts within the school district, presents a challenge to maintain a consistent learning environment within the district.

Recommendations

- 1 **Develop additional strategies to ensure that sites and new buildings are available to meet the needs of School District 68 in advance of the actual requirements.**

Such strategies will support requests to the Ministry for new facilities to be available when students need them.

- 2 **Develop a comprehensive ten-year plan to carry out upgrading of older schools.**

Older schools need to be developed into facilities that provide a learning environment consistent with current educational requirements.

- 3 **Review policy regarding optimum school size and update as appropriate.**

The current policy is not providing the results the community expects.

- 4 **Provide adequate covered outdoor areas and appropriate exterior learning areas at every school.**

The West Coast climate prevalent in our area makes it necessary for the school district to attempt to modify provincial standards set by the Ministry. There is a need to improve playfields and other areas for use in teaching to make them suitable for use on an extended basis throughout the year.

- 5 **Provide clean, bright and pleasant environments in schools.**

One of the most often repeated comments at hearings and via the surveys was to provide a stimulating physical environment through the choice of paint and colors used in school interiors. Studies have shown that this low-cost item can have a significant impact on the attitudes of students and employees.

- 6 **Enter into a working relationship with Malaspina College for the joint use of facilities throughout the district.**

Education is important to the whole community. At the present time Malaspina College is offering adult education after hours but only at the main campus. By working together, education could be located within community areas, making education more accessible to the general public.

- 7 Form school-based building committees to work on an ongoing basis with the district building committee.**

It is important that those working and learning in schools have a voice in the future of their facility.

Equipment

Public education is a people business and an examination of funding allocation shows this. About 85 percent of the budget goes to salaries. It is important, however, to realize that equipment is essential to the education process, particularly as we have entered the Information Age. Knowledge will increasingly be accessed and utilized through equipment.

Recommendations

- 8 Allocate a sufficient portion of equipment funding to provide appropriate computer and technology equipment to meet educational requirements.**

There will be an increasing demand to provide access to technology, equipment and information over the next decade.

- 9 Seek arrangements with Malaspina College and other community organizations to share learning resource materials and equipment.**

Education is a common responsibility; therefore it seems appropriate for all resources within the community to be available to all of the learners. Sharing resource materials with Malaspina College makes good logistical and economic sense.

- 10 Ensure the availability of the "world of information" to students in the school district.**

There is an increasing demand to provide access to outside computer data bases for all students. In addition, print and other learning resources need to be updated and to be available in classrooms and libraries.

- 11 Develop an ongoing planning process to ensure that sufficient funding is provided to replace equipment as it reaches the end of its useful life.**

Equipment within the school system is continually wearing out and must be replaced. With increasing amounts of higher-cost, shorter-life technology equipment, this problem will become more serious. In order to get the best value for our funding it is essential that an aggressive plan be put in place to ensure that equipment support for future learning skills is in place.

Transportation

While the focus is more on bringing education to the people, the reality is that people also need to get to their education. For environmental, logistical and cost reasons, effective, efficient transportation is essential to future education throughout the community.

Recommendations

- 12 Form a working relationship with the local regional transit system to ensure that transportation needs of students, staff and parents are met.**

Students and parents expressed a need for more convenient scheduling and accessibility to school and public transit systems.

It is important to utilize the community facilities and personnel in educating our children. The school district cannot afford all the necessary equipment and staff.

—Secondary Parent

I wish we could get more computer time.
—Elementary Student

I have to pay \$140 every year to ride the city bus. My parents pay school taxes and I have to ride a city bus!

—Secondary Student

- 13 Develop strategies to ensure that transportation systems will meet the future requirements of community, students and staff.**

There is a growing demand to provide expanded, cost-effective, environmentally sound public and school district transportation systems.

Environment

Environmental concerns are at the forefront in the community. The education system must continue to reflect those concerns.

Recommendations

- 14 Include district-wide environmental initiatives in the district's ongoing planning process.**

There is a growing demand in society for organizations to be responsible for their own environmental practices. In an educational organization these actions set a positive example for younger members of society.

Funding

People and knowledge are the heart of learning; however, education is also a big business. Learning can be more or less effective in relation to the wisdom used in acquiring and allocating funding within the community and school system.

Recommendations

- 15 Develop strategies for securing funding for public education.**

The critical need for financial resources was a concern underlying most of the work of the Task Force. It is proposed the school district be more aggressive, innovative and pro-active in seeking additional revenue, both directly and indirectly, from a variety of sources.

- 16 Implement an ongoing planning process which will ensure the allocation of funding to schools in order to address discrepancies within the school district.**

Formula allocation of funds does not respond to the varying needs of individual schools.

- 17 Develop a process for decentralizing decision-making in allocating, budgeting and expending funds.**

There is a need to make decisions closer to the point of service delivery, bearing in mind that district-wide requirements must continue to be met.

The district should take a more progressive stance regarding the importance of education and the need for support.

—Staff Member

Community Resources

My children's school tries very hard to involve parents and the community and I really appreciate this . . . I think it would make a difference if more involvement were encouraged and more parents took advantage of it.

—Elementary Parent

Our little school is definitely part of our closely-knit neighborhood. The teachers are all approachable and appear to thrive in a small school.

—Elementary Parent

The connections between the community and its schools should be expanded and broadened. That was the theme running through all input received by the community resources committee. The recommendations of the committee have been designed to develop strategies to improve and build on the already existing community/school ties.

Recommendations from the community resources committee are divided into three categories:

People Connection
Programs Connection
Facilities Connection

People Connection

There is a wide range of people in the community who have a vested interest in the education system.

Recommendations

- 1 Continue to encourage parents' involvement in decision-making
 - a) at the school level
 - b) at the district level

Parent involvement is stressed in the new *School Act* and the *Year 2000* programs. In both the surveys and public meetings, parents also said that they would like to be more involved in decision-making at all levels of the school system.

- 2 Develop procedures to introduce, train, and support volunteers, community members and parents in the school system.

Individuals want to be involved in the schools. It is important that they are made aware of appropriate available opportunities, that they are made to feel welcome, and that they receive appropriate

training and assistance to make their participation most successful.

- 3 Encourage and develop methods to increase the use of community resource people in schools.

There was a desire for increased opportunity for participation of community members in schools for:

- a) curriculum expertise/enhancement
- b) extended family social links
- c) ethnic diversity/insights
- d) business, industry, professional perspective

- 4 Develop policy to allow students greater involvement in decision-making.

Students who were invited to give input for Decisions for a Decade were knowledgeable, thoughtful and provided constructive suggestions. Students wanted their role in the school system officially recognized through such strategies as student forums and a greater voice for student government.

- 5 Increase coordination of services with other agencies.

There is a move in the province for increased coordination of services to youth such as Ministry of Social Services and Housing, Public Health, Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Programs, Parks and Recreation. The district needs to respond to this initiative.

Programs Connection

The community and the education system share many common goals and responsibilities. Defining when and how those responsibilities overlap and how they should be shared would help clarify the school district's responsibilities.

Recommendations

- 6 Each school community define the ways in which the school environment can become healthier.**

Healthier schools promote healthier learning and living environments. Funding is available to help with healthy school projects which will allow students to participate in creating a healthier community.

- 7 Continue to collaborate with other agencies to address the issue of hungry children.**

Hungry children cannot learn effectively. Lunch programs may not be a school district responsibility but they are a community responsibility and the district is part of the community.

- 8 Identify and promote new opportunities for students to make meaningful volunteer contributions to the community.**

Social responsibility is one important facet of education. Students who learn the rewards of community involvement during their school years will go on to be contributing members of the community in later years.

- 9 Expand cooperative community programs and projects between the school district and Malaspina College.**

Overlapping areas of interest between the college and the school district have led to a number of cooperative projects in such areas as the fine arts and the environment. As the school district and college expand, there is a need to consider new cooperative programs.

Facilities Connection

Schools are public facilities. Expanded use of schools beyond the traditional formal learning center increases socialization, self-improvement opportunities and learning experiences for all concerned — children, parents, community members, teachers and administrators. An extended daily schedule all year provides optimum use of school facilities. Increased use of schools as community facilities is cost-effective.

Recommendations

- 10 Increase the use of schools as centres of community activities and services.**

Schools already serve as a focus for the community or neighbourhood during the times school is in session. There was a desire among all groups for the community-focused use of schools throughout the year.

- 11 Communicate to the community the opportunities for school use outside of school hours.**

Schools are available for public use, but many of the people surveyed were not aware of the extent of the availability.

- 12 Develop a plan to encourage greater sharing of all public facilities, sites, parks, playgrounds and equipment.**

The public is asking for greater coordination among public agencies in order to save on costs and link recreation and education facilities.

Academic excellence cannot be achieved in a situation where children are hungry, neglected or fearful.
— Staff Member

I am quite concerned about the amount of activities that our schools are expected to take on in the area of social problems. . . . Other community agencies should be pressured to fill the gap.
— Elementary Parent

*Bring adult
classes to the
neighborhood for
easier access.*

*— Member of
the Community*

- 13 Continue to develop working relationships with other agencies to provide neighbourhood daycare and after-school care.**

There is a growing population of single-parent families and families with two working parents who are looking for daycare and after-school care close to schools.

- 14 Develop a working relationship with Malaspina College to decentralize community education course offerings into school facilities.**

A number of those surveyed asked for adult education opportunities which were decentralized and more accessible, preferably located in schools.

- 15 Continue to develop and expand partnership programs with the community.**

There will be greater real-life experience for students with assistance from the community. Networking of opportunities by business and education will result in better planning for the future.

Planning for Change

Change in every facet of public education was the dominant theme throughout the work of the Decisions for a Decade Task Force. Sweeping economic and social transformation of our communities and our world will affect all those who learn, work and live in School District 68.

The result will be major adjustments in most of the fundamentals of public education: in what students learn; in how they learn; in how schools and the school district are organized and structured to promote learning; in how material resources are marshalled and allocated in support of learning.

The most important change of all, however, is occurring in human relationships, the very life of public education.

During the next decade, there will be a unique opportunity for all of those involved in public education to take advantage of evolving, exciting new ways of perceiving and interacting with one another — students, teachers, administrators, support staff, trustees, parents, other interested community members. Public education in the school district can flourish during the Nineties if we meet this challenge.

In this report the Task Force has made 83 recommendations to help the school district bring about change in a number of critical areas. In some instances it may be possible to make changes immediately, since the recommendation could be managed within existing resources and procedures. There also are a number of recommendations, however, which will need to be carefully studied and developed. How this development occurs, and by whom, will be critical to the ultimate success of the recommendation.

Even while action on the recommendations is being planned, further changes will be occurring. What the school district needs, then, is an entirely new way to prepare for and handle change. This can only happen through a systematic, ongoing planning process.

The whole purpose of planning is to make decisions about the future before the future either forces the decisions or renders any decisions irrelevant.

(Cook, 1990)

In the opinion of the Task Force, strategic planning, both in how it is done and in its results, can best achieve this goal. Consequently, the Decisions for a Decade Task Force proposes that School District 68 develop a school district strategic plan as first priority for the 1991-92 school year; and commence implementation of that strategic plan no later than July 1, 1992.

Strategic Planning Defined

Strategic planning in education is the process through which a school district envisions its future and develops the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future.

This is expressed by strategic planning consultant Bill Cook as "The means by which an organization constantly recreates itself to achieve extraordinary purpose."

Gould, cited in *Education Leader*, says "strategic planning relies on extensive information gathering, exploration of alternatives and an emphasis on the vision of success". (*Education Leader*, April 1991)

According to Downey,

Strategic planning is a quest for both ends and means ; it is process for deciding both where the system should be going and how it should attempt to get there. Hence it is an activity which engages both those who set policies and those who plan to implement them ...

(Downey, 1991)

Ideally, strategic planning in education takes place in an atmosphere of mutual trust and common commitment. It encourages and involves all the partners in defining and supporting the mission, beliefs and objectives of the school system. The focus throughout is on cooperation and collaboration. Authoritarianism, unilateral action, edicts, prescriptions, or manipulation, should not have a place in the strategic planning process.

Strategic planning differs significantly from other varieties of planning commonly used in education. For example, although both types of planning are for an extended term, normally five to ten years, long-range planning is reactive whereas strategic planning is proactive.

Rather than simply reacting to situational crises and problems, strategic planning intends to deliberately create a better future.

(Kaufman and Herman, 1991)

Strategic planning, with its capacity to influence and change the future, also differs markedly from comprehensive planning (for example, accreditation self-studies). With comprehensive planning, components are identified and assessed in terms of performance, needs, future projections or expectations but planning is restricted to what already exists.

Comprehensive planning usually perpetuates institutions through static systems and meaningless jargon.

(Cook, 1990)

Nor is strategic planning the same as project planning. Strategic planning is system-wide; project planning involves development of only a particular component or task.

Program planning, too, is very different from strategic planning.

While program planning is the process of creating a grand design to make a concept operational, ultimately emphasis still is on sustaining functions, relationships and results.

(Cook, 1990)

In contrast, as already has been noted, strategic planning explores current realities and challenges in order to determine useful tactics for reaching a tomorrow which already is being positively influenced by the very process itself.

The Task Force concluded that no other type of planning is capable of providing public education with the many advantages of both process and results which are available through strategic planning.

The Strategic Planning Process

There are many models for strategic planning; however, all involve these three distinct steps or tasks.

1. *Performing the activities associated with determining the goals and the objectives to be attained over the long term;*
2. *Determining the best alternative for attaining these goals and objectives given the most appropriate match that can develop between the resources that are available (internal environment) and the*

external environment in which the goals and objectives are to be pursued, and;
3. *Relating this alternative to operating plans.*

(Lilly, 1985)

The strategic planning process outlined below is largely based on the Bill Cook model. However, this or any other specific process would need to be adapted to meet the particular circumstances of this school district.

1. Strategic Research and Analysis

In this first step of strategic planning, an internal analysis is made of existing performance, services and operations in education to determine current reality and perception about what is working well and what needs changing. This includes careful review of the existing organizational structure in relation to function, decision-making and communications.

An external analysis or environmental scan also is undertaken to identify significant social, economic, political and demographic trends which may impact upon public education performance and interfere with the school system's ability to achieve its mission.

Finally all these internal and external data are used to prepare an organization analysis which identifies actual and perceived strengths and weaknesses in the system. Simply put, these are the internal and external characteristics, circumstances and conditions which will either assist or limit the school system in realizing its mission.

2. Strategic Planning

During the second step, a strategic plan is developed to respond to the results of the organization analysis. A strategic planning team comprised of approximately twenty-five representatives of all key internal

and external groups meets in a short, highly-focused session to determine school system beliefs and mission statements arising out of the organization analysis. The statement of beliefs is "a formal expression of the organization's fundamental values; its ethical code, its overriding conviction, its inviolate commitments." (Cook, 1990)

Rather than beliefs, Newberry refers to values or those qualities which

state what the organization needs to be important; they are the "soul" of the system. These values enable an organization to approach problems consistently, because the core leadership values are published. They influence "the way we do things around here."

(Newberry 1990)

The mission statement, on the other hand, is a clear, succinct declaration of the school system's purpose and function; a melding of its vision and commitments. As its name suggests, the mission statement sets out the direction the school system will take in moving from present reality to future ideal. (Kaufman, 1988)

Newberry identifies two separate components here — purpose and mission. Purpose —

has to do with the answer to the question "What is our knitting?" "What is our focus?" In other words, what is the mandate of this ... school system ...

Mission, he says,

sets forth a strategy or a focus for carrying out the purpose of the school system ... This mission statement permeates all the policy-making and problem-solving initiatives of the Board, its leaders and its practitioners

(Newberry 1990)

This is a time of great change in education in B.C. We are being observed by educators internationally and have the opportunity to lead into an effective and rewarding educational model. We need support and confirmation from all levels. . .
— Teacher

The strategic planning team also is responsible for identifying critical issues which must be addressed if the school system is to flourish by accomplishing its declared mission. This process identifies those issues (threats) which may seriously limit or harm the organization, and those issues (opportunities) which may help it in realizing its mission.

General or school district objectives then are developed by the strategic planning team in response to these threats and opportunities. District objectives are the school system's commitment to achieve specific, measurable end results in order to accomplish its mission while remaining true to its beliefs. These objectives normally deal only with student achievement, performance or success, and are expressed in proposed results which are measurable, demonstrable, or observable in terms of time, money, quality and quantity. (Cook, 1990)

The final and most important aspect of the strategic planning team's work is development of strategies to achieve these objectives. Strategies tell how the school system will accomplish its objectives and, thereby, realize the mission. Strategies must have the potential to arrange and assign the human and material resources required to enable the school system to achieve its mission. This, in fact, is the essence of strategic planning.

3. Strategic Operating Plans

The third step of strategic planning is creation of strategic operating plans. All aspects of the plan developed by the planning team are communicated widely throughout the school and community system to foster understanding and commitment, and to generate interest in serving on one of the action teams. The purpose of action teams, one of which is established for each planning strategy, is to develop "detailed descriptions of the specific actions required to achieve specific results

necessary for the implementation of the strategies." (Cook, 1990)

There will be several such plans for one strategy, each with detailed directions, timelines, assignments of responsibilities and cost-benefit analyses. An action plan is the means through which a strategy becomes operational and capable of implementation. Preparation of action plans for each strategy normally will take several months.

Once they have been developed by action teams, action plans are scrutinized by the planning team to ensure they are true to the objectives, beliefs and mission of the district strategic plan. Accepted action plans then are recommended by the strategic planning team for Board approval.

Action plans approved by the Board proceed to implementation and by so doing, determine school district priorities and scheduling, and allocation of human and material resources for the school year. Through total support of these action plans by district leadership and by incorporating each action plan into individual job accountabilities, there is total control over and evaluation of each action plan at every stage of implementation. By means of this process, strategic planning is translated into strategic management.

The final aspect of strategic planning is the annual update of the strategic plan. This involves careful review of all strategic plan components in light of changing information and experience, including that resulting from implementation of current strategic action plans. In this manner, strategic planning becomes continuous, a way of life for the school system rather than a one-time event.

Equally important, this also means open, collaborative participation in and shared accountability for the decisions made and the results achieved in public education. Ideally, strategic planning can be most effective when it is linked with site-based

*It amazes me still
how often we are
asked for input and
how seldom things
change.
—Staff
Member*

Our children are our future. All children have unique talents and they need an opportunity to develop those talents in order to compete successfully in a world community.
—Elementary Parent

planning and site-based management.
(Feddema, 1990; Bailey, 1991)

This provides a responsibility/accountability continuum, or "responsible autonomy" (Candoli, 1991). Through this additional step, district strategic planning is translated into a system-wide strategic planning and strategic management process.

Recommendation

The Decisions for a Decade Task Force is convinced of the potential of strategic planning to provide the means for this school district to respond both immediately to the recommendations in this report, and continuously and effectively to the challenge of continuous change. The Task Force also believes that strategic planning can enable the school district to realize extraordinary levels of student achievement in public education while simultaneously liberalizing the entire system in accordance with the concepts of full professionalism and partnership as envisioned by the *Year 2000*, and the new *School Act*. In this respect, the Task Force is reassured by the commitment in principle which already has been made to strategic planning by many of those in key leadership positions in this district.

- The Decisions for a Decade Task Force recommends that School District 68 develop a school district strategic plan as first priority for the 1991-92 school year; and commence implementation of that strategic plan no later than July 1, 1992.

All our students deserve no less.

Selected References

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. *Strategic Planning*. Videotape, Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD, 1986.

Bailey, W. J. *School-site Management Applied*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Technomic, 1991.

Banach, William J. *The Top Ten Educational Issues*. 12th Edition. *Strategic Advantage Series*. Warren, Michigan: Institute for Future Studies, Macomb Community College, 1991.

Brandt, Ron. "On Public Schools of Choice: A Conversation with Seymour Fliegel." *Educational Leadership*, December 1990/January 1991.

Brandt, Ron and D'Arcangelo, Marcia, readers. "Strategic Planning." *Educational Leadership on Tape*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, April, 1991.

British Columbia, Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training. *Towards a Strategy for the 1990's: Developing a Foundation for Growth*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1989.

British Columbia, Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. *Strategic Planning Guidelines and Environmental Scan*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, January 1990.

British Columbia, Ministry of Education. *Primary Program: A Foundation Document*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1990.

British Columbia, Ministry of Education. *Annual Report: Ministry of Education*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1991.

British Columbia, Ministry of Education. *Year 2000: A Framework for Learning*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1990.

British Columbia, Ministry of Education. *Changes in Education: A Guide for Parents*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1991.

British Columbia, Office of the Provincial Secretary. "The Biggest Changes Ever." *British Columbia Report*. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1990.

British Columbia, Royal Commission on Education. *A Legacy for Learners: Summary of Findings*. B.M. Sullivan, Chairman. Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1988.

British Columbia School Trustees' Association. "Challenge, Motivate Students: Business Exec." *Education Leader*, December, 1990.

Brown, Daniel J. *Education Canada*, cited in "Report Hails School-Based Management." *Education Leader* December 14, 1990.

Calgary Board of Education. *Strategic Plan*. Unpublished paper dated December 11, 1990.

Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada. *C.E.C. Nanaimo Planning Strategy*. Ottawa: November, 1989.

Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada. *Youth - A National Stay-in-School Initiative*. Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1990.

Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada. *Success in the Works: A Policy Paper*. Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1989.

Canada, Employment and Immigration Canada. *A Profile of Canada's Emerging Workforce*. Ottawa: Ministry of Supply and Services, 1989.

Canadian Education Association. *Strategies for Public Involvement*. Toronto: Canadian Education Association, September, 1981.

Candoli, I. C. *School System Administration: A Strategic Plan for Site-Based Management*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Technomic, 1991.

Capra, F. *The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture*. New York: Bantam, 1982.

Central Island Community Futures Committee. *Phase II Report*. Nanaimo: CIFC, 1988.

Cetron, M. *Schools of the Future: How American Business and Education Can Cooperate to Save Our Schools*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1985.

Coleman, Peter *Improving Schools: School-Based Management and School Effectiveness*. Unpublished paper dated 1983.

Cook, W. J. Jr. *Bill Cook's Strategic Planning for America's Schools*. Arlington, Virginia: American Association of School Administrators, 1990.

Crosby, P. B. *The Eternally Successful Organization: The Art of Corporate Wellness*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988.

Downey, L.W. "Strategic Planning I: Fundamental Steps" *Canadian School Executive*, March 1991.

Downey, L.W. Strategic Planning II: Intelligence Gathering Techniques: *Canadian School Executive*, April 1991.

Drucker, P.F. *Managing the Non-profit Organization: Principles and Practices*. New York: Harper Collins, 1990.

Fallon, G. *The New Primary Program; Its Underlying Socio-cultural Paradigm and Its Degree of Congruence with the Societal Direction given in the Mission Statement set by British Columbia's Ministry of Education*. Unpublished paper delivered to the Decisions for a Decade Steering Committee meeting at Nanaimo, B.C., February 1991.

Farrell, J.H., from *Education Today*, Autumn, 1990, cited in: "Challenge, motivate students: business executive" *Education Leader*. December 1990.

Ferguson, M. *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, 1987.

Fisher, R. & Brown, S. *Getting Together: Building Relationships as We Negotiate*. New York: Penguin, 1988.

Fullan, M. G. & Hargreaves, A. *What's Worth Fighting For? Working Together for Your School*. Toronto: Ontario Public Teachers' Federation, 1991.

Goodlad, J. I. *A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984.

Gould, Susan *Journal of Staff Development*, "Strategic Planning Canadian Guide Decision-Making". *Education Leader*, April 19, 1991.

Hathaway, W.E. "Planning Schools for the 21st Century." *Canadian School Executive*, September 1990.

Jennison, T. *1989 Community Survey*. Nanaimo: Nanaimo Family Life Association, 1989.

Jothen, K. *An Analysis of Career, Technical, Vocational and Basic Training Needs in British Columbia 1989-93*. Richmond: Open Learning Agency, December 1990.

Kaufman, R. *Planning Educational Systems: A Results-Based Approach*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Technomic, 1988.

Kaufman, R. & Herman, J. *Strategic Planning in Education: Rethinking, Restructuring, Revitalizing*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Technomic, 1991.

Levering, R. *A Great Place to Work*. New York: Avon, 1988.

Levin, J.S. "Strategic Planning Vision and Decision." Workshop presented at Malaspina College, May, 1991.

Lilly, Edward R. "Board of Education and System-wide Strategic Planning." *CEFP Journal* Council of Educational Facility Planners International January/February 1985.

Long, B. G. & Reck, R. R. *The Win-win Negotiator*. New York: Pocket Books, 1987.

Mecklenburger, J. A. "What the Ostrich Sees: Technology and the Mission of American Education." *Phi Delta Kappan*, September, 1988.

Mecklenburger, J. A. "Educational Technology is Not Enough." *Phi Delta Kappan*, October, 1990.

Naisbitt, J. & Aburdene, P. *Re-inventing the Corporation*. New York: Megatrends, 1985.

Naisbitt, J. & Aburdene, P. *Megatrends 2000*. New York: Megatrends, 1990.

Nanaimo Family Life Association. *Challenge for Change: A Symposium to Create a Vision for Families and Community Living in Nanaimo*. Nanaimo: Proceedings of Symposium, October 2-3, 1990.

National Indian Brotherhood — Assembly of First Nations. *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future — A Declaration of First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education*. Ottawa: National Indian Brotherhood - Assembly of First Nations, 1988.

National Technology Policy Roundtable. *A Community of Communities - Preparing Canada for the 21st Century*. Discussion Draft and Summary of Views, Ottawa: 1989.

Newberry, A.J.H. "Filters of Analysis: Bringing Meaning to Strategic Planning." *The Canadian School Executive*, January 1990.

Nierenberg, G. I. *The Art of Negotiating*. New York: Fireside, 1981.

Palazzi, K. "Education Needs Radical Reorganization". *The Canadian School Executive*, April 1991.

Robert, M. *Managing Conflict from the Inside Out*. California: University Associates, 1982.

San Diego City Schools, Schools of the Future Commission. *Which Way to the Future? San Diego and its Schools at a Crossroads*. San Diego: San Diego City Schools, June, 1987

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria). *Five Year Plan* Unpublished paper, 1990..

School District No. 68 (Nanaimo). *Annual Report 1989-1990*. Nanaimo: School District No. 68, 1991.

School District No. 68 (Nanaimo). *Policies and Procedures*. Unpublished Policy Manual.

School District No. 68 (Nanaimo). *Summary Report*. S.C.A.T.E. 1989. R.A. Malatest and Associates, April 1989.

"Ten Characteristics of an Ideal Community School." *Access Magazine*, Spring, 1980.

Toffler, A. *Future Shock*. New York: Random House, 1970.

Toffler, A. *The Third Wave*. New York: Morrow, 1981.



DECISIONS FOR A DECADE

TASK FORCE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY REPORT: DECISIONS FOR A DECADE SURVEY

**School District 68 (Nanaimo)
June 1991**

Decisions for a Decade Task Force Report and Recommendations

APPENDICES

Forward

In addition to surveying the literature, reviewing statutes and policies, studying initiatives of other school districts, and researching recent studies otherwise undertaken by School District #68 (Nanaimo), for its purposes the Task Force obtained and analyzed original data through:

- extensive written and telephone surveys of seven different internal and external groups
- thirteen public meetings, including one in each of the nine zones of the School District, two with students, one with seniors and one with all members of the Task Force itself
- written and/or oral submissions made on public education at public hearings by over twenty interested groups and individuals.

These data have been assembled together in their original form to constitute this Appendices for the information of key reference groups and other interested parties.

Additional inquiries should be directed to:

E.A. (Ted) Killough
Project Director, Decisions for a Decade
Director of Instruction
Education Personnel & Planning
School District #68 (Nanaimo)
395 Wakesiah Avenue
NANAIMO, B.C. V9R 3K6 (604) 754-5521

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendix A — Summary Report: Decisions for a Decade Survey

Appendix B — Notes: Public Meetings

Zone 1
Zone 2
Zone 3
Zone 4
Zone 5
Zone 6
Zone 7
Zone 8
Zone 9
Elementary Students
Secondary Students
Senior Citizens
Task Force

Appendix C — Written Submissions/Notes: Public Hearings

In Order of Presentation:

A. Scott, Citizen's Advocacy Group
G. Raines, Social Worker
M. Wasley, Association for Better Communities
M. Bordelatto, Nanaimo Association for Independant Living
J. Blackman, Central Vancouver Island Health Unit
I. Webber, Literacy Nanaimo
G. DiGeorgio, G. Dodd, R. Skipsey, L. Venables, Nanaimo School
Administrators' Association
J. Browne, Student, V.A.S.T.
R. Gullison, Teacher
J. Baxter, Malaspina College
M. Shakespeare, S. Creba, Pacific Childcare Society
Les Dickason, Malaspina College
G. Harris, Chemainus Band
B. Thomas, Barbara White, Nanaimo Band
B. Brown, Nanoose Band
D. Brock, Tillicum Haus
J. Millar, Central Vancouver Island Health Unit
I. Webber, Literacy Nanaimo (brief)
Fundamental English Class, Malaspina College

SUMMARY REPORT
DECISIONS FOR A DECADE SURVEY

Prepared For
SCHOOL DISTRICT #68 (NANAIMO)

Prepared By
R.A. MALATEST & ASSOCIATES LTD.
February 1991

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	PAGE
Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	3
Survey Highlights.....	6
Technical Aspects.....	22
1. Survey Design	22
2. Survey Delivery	22
2.1 Parents	22
2.2 Staff	23
2.3 Students	23
2.4 Community	24
3. Response Rates	24
4. Abbreviations.....	25
5. Report Structure	26
6. Sample Characteristics - Public Sample.....	27
7. Sample Characteristics - Parent/Student Sample	29
8. Interpretation of Results.....	30
9. Statistical Differences.....	31
10. Interpretation of Scores Used.....	31
11. Mean Score Analysis	32
 A. DISTRICT ANALYSIS	
Section I: General Satisfaction with SD68	35
1.1 General Quality of Education in SD68	35
Section II: Views on SD68 Performance in Selected Areas.....	37
2.1 Views on the Learning Environment in SD68	37
2.2 Views on Environmental Policies in SD68	39
2.3 Support for the Introduction of Day-Care/Student-Care Programs in SD68	40
2.4 General Satisfaction with SD68 Staff	41
2.5 Effectiveness in Preparing Students for Work or Advanced Education	44
2.6 Views on SD68 Facilities	46

TABLE OF CONTENTS(cont)

SUBJECT	PAGE
Section III: Views On District Communication.....	48
3.1 School/Teacher Communication with Parents.....	49
3.2 Community Sources of Information Concerning Education in SD68.....	50
3.3 School/District Communication with SD68 Employees.....	52
Section IV: Educational Options in SD68.....	53
4.1 Educational Orientation of the District.....	54
4.2 Importance of District Leadership in Social & Community Areas.....	57
4.3 Opinion About Proposed Funding Allocations.....	59
4.4 Operating Considerations in SD68.....	61
 B. TARGET GROUP ANALYSIS	
Section V: Survey of Elementary & Secondary Students.....	63
5.1 Elementary Students - School Strengths & Weaknesses.....	64
5.2 Elementary Student Comments.....	65
5.3 Views on Secondary Students - Selected Areas.....	66
5.4 Secondary Students - Strengths & Weaknesses.....	67
5.5 Secondary Student Comments.....	68
Section VI: Survey of Parents & the Business Community.....	69
6.1 School/District Strengths & Weaknesses - Elementary & Secondary Parents.....	70
6.2 Elementary Parents - Comments.....	71
6.3 Secondary Parents - Comments.....	72
6.4 Community - Comments.....	73
6.5 Business Community - Comments.....	74
Section VII: Views of Recent Graduates from SD68.....	75
7.1 Current Status of Recent Graduates of SD68.....	76
7.2 Views of Recent Graduates on Preparation for Paid Employment/ Advanced Education.....	77
7.3 SD68 Graduates - Comments.....	78
Section VIII: Staff Concerns & Opinion in SD68.....	79
8.1 SD68 Strengths & Weaknesses - SD68 Staff.....	80
8.2 SD68 Staff - Comments.....	81

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared for the Nanaimo School District (School District #68) by R.A. Malatest and Associates Ltd.

The Decisions for a Decade Survey was initiated by the *Steering Committee* under the direction of Mr. Ted Killough, Director of Education Personnel, School District #68. The subsequent development and administration of the survey were guided by the *Steering Committee* comprised of the following members:

E.A. (Ted) Killough	Project Director
Jennifer McNeil	Project Secretary
Donna Reimer	Communications Officer
Doug Sommers	Co-Chairperson, Program Resources Committee
Stephen Sims	Co-Chairperson, Program Resources Committee
George Duffell	Chairperson, Human Resources Committee
Betty Shaw	Chairperson, Community Resources Committee
Dave Williamson	Chairperson, Material Resources Committee
Dave Sawbridge	Co-Chairperson, Material Resources Committee
June Harrison	School Board Trustee
Joy Gelger	School Board Trustee
Tony Dobson	Research Committee
Gerald Fallon	Research Committee
Elizabeth Pennell	Staff Development, Resource Teacher

the *Community Resources Committee* comprised of the following members:

Betty Shaw	Chairperson
Donna Reimer	Communications Officer
Fred McCreath	Home Builders' Association
Len Rowantree	Malaspina College
Dr. Jim Baxter	Malaspina College
Bonnie Stuart	N.D.S.S. Student
Jennifer Lynch	John Barsby Student
Allison Cutler	Central Vancouver Health Unit
Betty Nickull	Seniors Representative
Karla Wiebe	N.D.S.S. Student
Anita Longereis	Nanaimo Family Life (V.A.S.T.)
Stacie Rosentreter	V.A.S.T. Student

INTRODUCTION

The *Decisions for a Decade Survey*, initiated by SD68 (Nanaimo) in the Fall of 1990, was commissioned as part of the District's Strategic Planning Process in order that the District might become more cognizant of the current opinions and attitudes held by a cross-section of students, parents, staff and the general public (including businesses and recent graduates), and to provide the District with an insight into respective attitudes about the future direction of education in the Nanaimo School District. It was envisioned that the survey research would provide additional information to assist the District in the development of an educational framework that would reflect the concerns and requirements of a broad spectrum of "stakeholder" and non-stakeholder groups encompassed within SD68.

The School District, therefore, commissioned seven related surveys which were administered to the general public (parents/non-parents), business and professional organizations, recent graduates, elementary and secondary students, parents and all staff in SD68. A sample of SD68 staff were also surveyed to ascertain their opinion about curriculum issues in the Nanaimo School District. The research plan, developed by the District Steering Committee, in consultation with R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd., was designed to fulfill survey objectives (identification of target group opinion, assessment of differences in opinion among various target groups, educational goals and achievement, etc.), as well as meet strict statistical research requirements to ensure the validity of results obtained at District and sub-District levels. The *Decisions for a Decade Survey* should provide a framework by which the District can measure current opinion about education in Nanaimo, as well as provide information as to expectations regarding the future orientation of education in Nanaimo during the next ten years.

Given the need to obtain accurate information using the most cost-effective approaches available, the following survey vehicles were used:

- a telephone survey of the general public (parents/non-parents)
- a telephone survey of the business/professional community
- a telephone survey of recent graduates
- a mail-out survey of elementary/secondary parents
- a mail-out survey of SD68 staff
- an intercept (in-school) of elementary/secondary students
- a mail-out survey of SD68 staff (curriculum issues)

Although each group was administered a modified survey that reflected its unique concerns, included in most surveys were several "core" questions to facilitate the comparison of attitudes held by the different target populations on various educational issues. To ensure confidentiality, for the target groups that received a mail-out survey (parents, staff), each respondent was instructed to complete and

the *Program Resources Committee* comprised of the following members:

Doug Sommers	Co-Chairperson
Steven Sims	Co-Chairperson
Tom Benjamin	C.E.I.C.
Lauren Linden	C.E.I.C.
Nancy Axford	Rock City Elementary Teacher
Dolly Robertson-Reiser	Nanaimo/Duncan District Labour Council
Marg Smith	C.R.C. Primary Resource Teacher
Lynda Duncan	Wellington Student
Jamie Reimer	N.D.S.S. Student
Roberta Wicker	V.A.S.T. Student
Lisa Agnew	V.A.S.T. Student
Val Cooke	C.R.C. Intermediate Resource Teacher

the *Human Resources Committee* comprised of the following members:

George Duffell	Chairperson
Doug McBride	Coast Personnel Services
Jack Perry	MacMillan Bloedel Ltd.
Robyn Clements	Dufferin Crescent Teacher
Christy Roberts	N.D.S.S. Student
Moya Byrne	Ladysmith Student

the *Material Resources Committee* comprised of the following members:

Dave Williamson	Chairperson
Dave Sawbridge	Co-Chairperson
Ernie Levesque	City of Nanaimo
Tony Dobson	V.A.S.T. Teacher
Czarina Gutierrez	Woodlands Student
Gillian Bledsoe	V.A.S.T. Student

R.A. Malatest and Associates Ltd. was responsible for the administration, tabulation and statistical analysis of the *Decisions for a Decade Survey* and acted as consultants for the general development of the survey instrument.

As apparent by the high response rate, the parents, students, staff, and general public of the Nanaimo School District indicated significant interest in the public school system of their community. Without the participation and cooperation of these people, this research could not have been completed.

return the survey in a sealed envelope to be opened only by the survey consultants. While data was obtained from parents, students and staff for most schools, information has been presented at the District and sub-District levels only. It was decided that this survey was not to duplicate the SCATE (Survey of Community Attitudes Towards Education) process in place to provide school-based reports. It should be noted that respondents were never requested to identify themselves. The number of comments (more than 2,100 respondents provided additional comments) included in the surveys suggests that participants had considerable confidence in the confidentiality of the information provided for the *Decisions for a Decade Survey*.

The *Decisions for a Decade Survey* was commissioned to provide information for the four different sub-committees that comprised the *Decisions for a Decade Task Force*. The four committees: Material Resources, Personnel Resources, Community Resources, and Program Resources, were instrumental in the development and modification of the respective survey instruments. While each survey was tailored to address the issues pertinent to, and concerns of, the various sub-committees, there were several themes or core questions developed that were administered to most respondents. These core questions (modified for each group) were classified as follows:

1. *Opinion About the Learning Environment in SD68*
2. *Views on School/District Communication*
3. *Views on Education "Options" in SD68*
4. *Overall Satisfaction with the School/District*
5. *Respondent Comments*

This *Summary Report* examines the key issues raised in the *Decisions for a Decade Survey*. In addition to the *Summary Report*, reports were generated for each of the four sub-committees. In these reports, data from several surveys were combined to provide a comprehensive overview of respondent attitude with respect to the various issues identified by each sub-committee.

While the surveys consisted primarily of closed-ended questions, all respondents were provided with the opportunity to include additional comments about the School District and/or issues addressed in the survey. Use of color-coded surveys, as well as basic demographic data, facilitated the analysis of opinion between the target groups on the basis of school type (elementary, secondary), job classification (for SD68 employees), as well as differences in attitudes on the basis of gender, age, education, involvement (parent/non-parent) in education and geographic location.

The *Decisions for a Decade Survey* was administered in November, 1990 to all target groups located throughout the District. Of the approximately 4,400 surveys distributed, 2,823 usable surveys were obtained prior to the processing cut-off date of January 15, 1991. In addition, 1,942 surveys were completed by students who were administered an in-school questionnaire by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. research staff. Response rates ranged from 90.1% among SD68 employees to 37.4% among parents whose children were in a secondary school. After adjusting for people/businesses who had moved and could not be contacted, the overall response rate for the *Decisions for a Decade Survey* was

66.0% which compares favourably to the response rates of similar surveys administered by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. for other school districts in British Columbia. Readers are encouraged to consult the *Technical Aspects* section for additional information pertaining to research methodology, response rates, and survey delivery.

It must be emphasized that the findings of the *Decisions for a Decade Survey* are a "snapshot" of community opinion as of Fall 1990. As such, this depiction could vary considerably given the changes occurring in education in Nanaimo and throughout British Columbia.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

Highlighted in this section are the major findings of the survey research (*Decisions for a Decade Survey*) conducted for School District #68 (Nanaimo) in November-December 1990.

1. VIEWS ON THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SD68

- For most surveys, respondents were asked to comment on the quality of education provided in either their school, or child's school, or by the District in general. As highlighted in Table 1, satisfaction with the education provided in SD68 school ranged from 79.7% among District Administrative Officers (A.O.'s) to 40.7% among SD68 secondary students. In combining the results of the various target groups, it was found that among the 4,366 respondents, 59.3% were generally satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of education provided in SD68 schools, 18.3% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied and almost one-quarter (22.4%) were neutral (15.8%) in their response or had no opinion (6.6%).

Table 1
Satisfaction with the Education Provided in SD68 Schools
by Target Group

Group	% Sat/ Very Sat	% Dissat/ Very Dissat	% Neutral	% No Opinion	Survey Question
Students:					
Elementary	62.7%	9.6%	24.4%	3.3%	Q7
Secondary	40.7%	26.6%	27.7%	5.0%	Q12
Student Average	48.2%	20.8%	26.6%	4.4%	N/A
Parents:					
Elementary	70.3%	11.9%	16.2%	1.6%	Q17C
Secondary	57.4%	19.2%	20.9%	2.5%	Q19C
Parent Average	65.6%	14.6%	17.9%	1.9%	N/A
Instructional Staff	79.3%	12.5%	N/A	8.2%	Q14C
A.O.'s	79.7%	1.4%	N/A	18.9%	Q14C
Support/Other	55.8%	10.6%	N/A	33.6%	Q14C
Staff Average	72.2%	12.0%	N/A	15.8%	N/A

Table 1 (Cont.)
Satisfaction with the Education Provided in SD68 Schools
by Target Group

Group	% Sat/ Very Sat	% Dissat/ Very Dissat	% Neutral	% No Opinion	Survey Question
Business	N/A	—	—	—	N/A
Graduates	72.4%	24.6%	N/A/	3.0%	Q12
Public	43.0%	30.1%	N/A	26.9%	Q7
SD68 Average	59.3%	18.3%	15.8%	6.6%	N/A

n = 4,366

- When asked to compare the quality of education in both SD68 and the province, respondents rated the quality of education in SD68 to be better than in the rest of British Columbia. In addition, parents and staff felt that their particular school was doing better than schools elsewhere in the District or province. Combining the responses of parents and staff, the level of satisfaction with the quality of education provided in public schools in B.C. (51.6% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied) or in the District (59.2%) was lower than satisfaction with the respondent's particular school (72.3%).

2. VIEWS ON THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN SD68

- The results of the survey suggest that the District has promoted a positive learning environment. As highlighted in Table 2, students, recent graduates and parents gave high marks to learning environment factors in SD68.

Table 2
Views on the Learning Environment in SD68

% Agree or Strongly Agree:

Group/Area	School Promotes Positive Student Behaviour	Child Feels Safe at School	Teacher Competence	Promotes Lifelong Learning
Students:				
Elementary	79.0%	65.2%	N/A	N/A
Secondary	59.2%	59.3%	51.0%	N/A
Student Avg.	66.0%	61.4%	51.0%	N/A
Parents:				
Elementary	81.7%	83.8%	81.9%	N/A
Secondary	66.2%	71.2%	60.1%	N/A
Parent Avg.	76.1%	79.2%	66.1%	N/A
Graduates	N/A	N/A	N/A	67.2%
SD68 Avg.	69.3%	67.3%	60.9%	N/A

3. SATISFACTION WITH SD68 STAFF/ADMINISTRATION

- Respondents were asked to comment on the work of teachers and their school administration. As illustrated in Table 3, respondents expressed greater relative satisfaction with the teaching ability of teachers (60.8% of all respondents were satisfied or very satisfied) than with teacher involvement in extracurricular activities (46.5%) or the performance of school administrators (50.5%)

Table 3
Satisfaction with SD68 Teachers/School Administration
by Target Group

% Agree/Strongly Agree:

Group/Area	Teachers' Teaching Ability	Teachers' Extra-Curric. Involvement	School Admin
Secondary Students	51.0%	40.4%	34.5%
Elementary Parents	81.9%	58.9%	76.2%
Secondary Parents	60.1%	46.7%	63.2%
Parent Average	73.9%	54.4%	71.5%
Public	59.7%	N/A	N/A
SD68 Average	60.8%	46.5%	50.5%

n = 2,597

- In general, parents tended to be very satisfied with the availability of their child's teacher as 91.8% of elementary and 81.1% of secondary parents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of their child's teacher when required. Parents were less satisfied with the extent to which teachers recognized the individual learning needs of their respective child(ren). Only 54.0% of elementary parents and 23.9% of secondary parents agreed that the individual learning needs of their children were being met.

4. EFFECTIVENESS IN PREPARING STUDENTS FOR WORK/ADVANCED EDUCATION

- Survey results suggest that there are considerable differences in opinion with respect to the ability of SD68 graduates to function effectively in the workplace. Whereas almost three-quarters (72.4%) of graduates indicated that the District had prepared them very well (14.2%) or adequately (58.2%) for advanced education or paid employment, a much lower proportion of secondary parents (24.4%) were of the same opinion.
- Among the business/professional community, respondents were most critical of SD68 graduates' decision-making skills, as only 40.4% of businesses were satisfied or very satisfied with the decision-making skills of SD68 graduates. Similarly, business respondents assigned low scores to graduates' reading and writing abilities: more than 40% of businesses contacted were dissatisfied (31.4%) or very dissatisfied (9.0%) with SD68 students' reading and writing skills.
- Business people in Nanaimo were generally positive in their opinion about the adaptability of graduates in the workplace; 69.2% of business people surveyed were satisfied (69.2%) or very satisfied (7.1%) with the ease with which students adapted to the workplace.
- Business respondents (94.2%) placed considerable emphasis on graduates having a basic working knowledge of computers. Similarly, a large proportion (88.5%) of business people were supportive of partnerships with schools; and more than 90% of firms indicated that businesses should be more willing to accept students for work education programs.
- Only 21.2% of public respondents contacted indicated that they thought SD68 graduates had the necessary vocational skills for the workplace. In contrast, more than one-half (57.3%) of public participants indicated that they were dissatisfied (38.2%) or very dissatisfied (19.1%) with the vocational skills provided to SD68 graduates. The inadequacy of vocational skills among students graduating from Nanaimo schools is a major concern among public respondents contacted for this research.

5. VIEWS ON SD68 FACILITIES

- Parents, students, staff and graduates were asked to comment on their satisfaction with SD68 facilities (library, building, grounds, gymnasium) and equipment (computers). As highlighted in Table 4, almost one-quarter (24.4%) of respondents were dissatisfied with SD68 buildings. A significant proportion of respondents were also dissatisfied with the school grounds (21.1%) and school library (14.7%).

Table 4
Satisfaction with District Facilities
by Respondent Group
Mean Score Basis¹

% Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied with School:

Group/Area	Library	Grounds	Building	Gym	Computers
Elementary Students	15.0%	25.0%	20.9%	8.5%	8.2%
Secondary Students	15.2%	26.7%	28.6%	19.1%	9.6%
Students Average	15.1%	26.0%	26.0%	15.4%	9.0%
Elementary Parents	13.6%	15.4%	20.7%	N/A	N/A
Secondary Parents	14.7%	10.0%	26.1%	N/A	N/A
Parents Average	14.1%	13.4%	22.6%	N/A	N/A
Graduates	12.7%	5.9%	16.4%	13.4%	N/A
Staff	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	38.5%
SD68 Average	14.7%	21.1%	24.4%	15.3%	N/A

6. COMMUNICATION IN SD68

- In general, it appears that the District has done a good job in fostering communication with parents, as more than one-half of all parents were satisfied or very satisfied with the communication and information received about their child's learning or school events, programs and accomplishments. Parents were also very satisfied with the accessibility of teachers, as 87.9% of parents agreed (51.4%) or strongly agreed (36.5%) with the statement that parents could easily contact their child's teacher when necessary.

Table 5
Parental Satisfaction¹ with School/Teacher Communication
Selected Areas

Area/Group	Elementary Parents	Secondary Parents	SD68
Information about child's learning progress	62.0%	51.8%	58.3%
School welcome	90.4%	78.4%	86.0%
School information - programs/events/etc.	82.2%	62.0%	74.9%
Ease of contact: parent/teacher	91.8%	81.1%	87.9%
Average: four areas	81.6%	68.3%	76.8%

¹Percent Agree or Strongly Agree
n = 985

- Public respondents obtained most of their information about the District from personal contact with students: 27.8% of public respondents indicated that their primary source of information about education in SD68 was from their contact with students. A large proportion of respondents, however, form their opinions on the basis of newspaper articles (26.0%), from contact with SD68 staff (12.5%), or through contact with parents (8.1%).
- Questions were also included in all staff surveys to determine staff satisfaction with their communication both within their school and with the District senior management and trustees. In general, administrative officers were most satisfied with the level of communication with senior management, as a higher proportion of this group was satisfied with communication between Senior Management and A.O.'s (81.2% of A.O.'s felt that such communication was satisfactory or very satisfactory) and between A.O.'s and the Board of Trustees (56.5%) than were teachers or support staff. 64.3% of teachers were satisfied with their communication with Senior Management; less than 36% of teachers were satisfied with the communication with Trustees.

7. PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT WITH SD68

- 24.8% of the public sample considered themselves to be "actively involved" in the public school system. There were, however, notable differences within the public sample. For example, although more than one-half (56.1%) of parents thought themselves to be active participants, only 11.8% of non-parents were of the same opinion. In addition, female respondents were more involved in the public school system than were male respondents.

Table 6
Involvement with SD68
by Respondent Class - Public Sample

Group	Involved	Not Involved	TOTAL
Parents	56.1%	43.9%	100.0%
Non-Parents	11.8%	88.2%	100.0%
Female	26.5%	73.5%	100.0%
Male	22.6%	77.4%	100.0%
Sample	24.8%	75.2%	100.0%

n = 335

- Of those people who considered themselves to be actively involved in the public school system, the majority, 64.2%, indicated that their involvement was as parents or relatives, 8.6% as members of the P.T.A. or as school volunteers, and, 13.6% said that they were involved as individuals interested in education in SD68.
- Among the 156 businesses surveyed, more than one-half (50.6%) of the respondents contacted indicated that they had visited a school in SD68 during the last year. Only 23.7%, however, of business people indicated that they were actively involved in the public school system.

8. PARENT/COMMUNICATION INPUT INTO DECISION-MAKING IN SD68

- 40.5% of elementary parents in SD68 indicated that they were satisfied with their opportunity for involvement in their school's goal setting process; 32.4% of secondary parents were of the same opinion.
- Almost one-fifth (19.2%) of parents surveyed had no opinion with respect to their involvement in their school's goal setting process.
- Of the 156 businesses surveyed, 46.8% of respondents stated that they were satisfied with their communication and interaction with SD68, while 19.2% were dissatisfied and 34.0% had no opinion.

9. SUPPORT FOR DAY-CARE/STUDENT-CARE IN SD68 SCHOOLS

- Approximately 43% of staff and public respondents were supportive of the District's establishing both a day-care and student-care program (29.2%), a day-care program only (8.4%) or a student-care program (5.1%) only. 35.7 percent of respondents were opposed to the District's establishing such programs; and 21.6% of respondents had no opinion with respect to the provision of such services in SD68 schools.
- Public respondents tended to be more vocal in their opposition to such a program, as 43.0% of public respondents were against the establishment of such programs in SD68 schools.
- There was little difference in opinion among SD68 staff on the basis of job classification, although A.O.'s were slightly more positive (51.5%) about the provision of such services than were instructional (39.8%) or support staff (41.7%).

10. ISSUES AFFECTING STAFF IN SD68

- The majority of SD68 employees (82.9%) were satisfied (60.0%) or very satisfied (22.9%) with their respective jobs. In comparison, of the 1,064 employees who completed the survey, 14.4% stated that they were dissatisfied with their job and 1.1% indicated that they were generally very dissatisfied with their job. 1.5 percent of respondents had no opinion.
- Consistent with the generally high level of job satisfaction, satisfaction about SD68 as an employer was also very high. As compared to the 82.9% of employees who were satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs, 78.1% of employees were similarly satisfied with the District as an employer.
- Respondents were asked to comment on the recognition and support they received from several identified groups: parents, the community, other school staff, students and School Board staff. In general, respondents indicated that they received comparatively less support from School District staff, trustees, and the community.
- It should be noted that in comparison to surveys undertaken for other Districts, the average level of recognition and support received by SD68 employees is higher than that received by employees of most other districts.

Table 7
Satisfaction¹ with Support/Recognition Received
from Various Groups

Support/Staff Group	Instructional	A.O.'s	Support/Other	Staff Average
Co-Workers	92.8%	91.3%	88.8%	91.5%
School Admin	82.2%	82.6%	75.3%	80.2%
Students	86.6%	79.7%	66.0%	80.1%
Parents	75.9%	66.8%	54.5%	69.7%
School Board staff	54.3%	79.7%	59.9%	57.6%
Community	52.4%	63.7%	49.4%	52.2%
School Trustees	32.4%	47.8%	32.7%	33.5%
Average - 7 Areas	68.1%	73.1%	60.9%	66.9%

n = 1,064

11. DISTRICT OPTIONS: EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION

- An integral element in the *Decisions for a Decade Survey* was to provide the District with a better appreciation of the attitudes towards identified education options in the Nanaimo School District. In this context, respondents were asked to identify what direction the District should follow in the development and delivery of educational programs in the Nanaimo area during the next ten years.
- Most respondents were asked to identify policies that the District should promote during the next decade. Specifically, participants were asked to rate the importance of the following District options:
 1. *Promoting above-average capabilities in reading, writing and arithmetic*
 2. *Promoting above-average problem-solving skills and independent/creative thinking*
 3. *Ensuring students have the necessary vocational/technological skills*
 4. *Ensuring students have adequate social and interpersonal skills*
- As highlighted in Table 8, there was a considerable difference in opinion between the various groups in terms of the educational philosophy the District should follow during the next ten years. For example, although almost one-half (46.1%) of public respondents and 40.3% of businesses indicated that the District should promote above-average student capabilities in the three "R's" (reading, writing, arithmetic), only 15.0% of staff surveyed were of the same opinion. Similarly, there were considerable differences in opinion with respect to the relative importance of problem-solving, vocational and technological skills and social/interpersonal qualities.

Table 8
Future Educational Philosophy of SD68
Proportion Indicating Listed Goal as Most Important
by Target Group

Students should have above-average skills in:

Group/Goal	3 "R's"	Problem-Solving	Vocational/ Technical	Social/Interpersonal
Secondary Students	21.1%	20.1%	24.2%	22.3%
Parents:				
Elementary	29.2%	40.6%	18.2%	10.8%
Secondary	26.2%	40.8%	21.1%	11.5%
Parent Avg	28.1%	40.6%	19.3%	11.1%

Table 8 (Cont.)
Future Educational Philosophy of SD68
Proportion Indicating Listed Goal as Most Important
by Target Group

Students should have above-average skills in:

Group/Goal	3 "R's"	Problem-Solving	Vocational/ Technical	Social/Interpersonal
Instructional staff	14.1%	48.7%	7.3%	29.7%
A.O.'s	7.9%	49.2%	7.9%	32.3%
Support/Other	19.0%	38.1%	27.2%	13.4%
Staff Average	15.0%	45.7%	12.9%	25.3%
Community	46.1%	31.2%	13.4%	9.7%
Business	40.3%	29.9%	16.9%	12.4%
Graduates	33.6%	41.0%	10.4%	14.9%
SD68 Average	24.6%	33.7%	18.4%	18.7%

n = 3,642

Note: Totals may add to over 100 because of multiple responses

12. DISTRICT OPTIONS: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & POLICIES

Secondary students, parents, and staff were asked to comment on the relative importance of various social and community goals that should be pursued by the District.

- Highlighted in Table 9 is the relative importance assigned by students, parents and staff to five identified social goals that could be pursued by the District during the next ten years. More than one-quarter of respondents indicated that career/work experience programs and social policies should be the most important elements in District policies; a much lower proportion (9.6%) of participants felt that the District should concentrate on promoting policies that enhanced opportunities for the disabled or special needs individuals, or policies that promoted greater sharing of public facilities (6.4%).
- The relative importance of each policy differed significantly across the three target groups. Parents felt that it was most important to promote those policies that emphasized career/work experience programs with business employers; secondary students assigned greater relative importance to the District providing leadership on social issues such as student hunger, multiculturalism and child abuse. SD68 staff indicated that District efforts should be focussing on the development of appropriate environmental practices.

Table 9
Relative Importance of Selected Social/Vocational Goals
Proportion of Respondents Listing Goals as Most Important
by Target Group

Goal/Group	S/Sec'd	Parents	Staff	SD68
Career/work experience programs with employers	22.9%	42.4%	24.6%	28.8%
Social Policies (hunger, multiculturalism, etc.)	30.9%	21.4%	26.2%	26.8%
Environmentally responsible practices	18.9%	17.7%	27.9%	21.4%
Enhance opportunities for disabled/special needs	9.9%	9.4%	9.5%	9.6%
Greater sharing of public facilities	6.5%	6.1%	6.5%	6.4%

n = 3,024

Note: Totals may not add to 100 because of missing data and/or multiple responses

13. DISTRICT OPTIONS: FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

Parents and staff were asked to indicate how monies should be allocated in the District if additional funds for education should become available through increased property taxes.

- Of the 1,822 parent and staff participants who responded, 59.5% indicated that additional funding should be allocated first to decrease class sizes in SD68. Support for smaller classes ranged from 76.0% among SD68 instructional staff to 47.1% among secondary parents and 43.6% among District support/non-instructional staff.
- On a first choice basis, approximately 15% of respondents indicated that additional funding should be targetted for the upgrading and/or establishment of new educational programs (17.3% of respondents stated that this should be the first priority for new funding), or for the upgrading of school facilities including buildings, labs and gymnasiums (15.1%). 7.1 percent of respondents suggested that additional funding should be allocated for the purchase/upgrading of new equipment (sports/lab equipment, computers, musical instruments, etc.).
- It should be noted that the identified funding allocations might not be representative of the community as a whole, as these questions were not administered to the public and business community respondents.

14. EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS: OPERATING CONSIDERATIONS

Parents and staff respondents were asked to comment on the appropriateness of various operational models to enhance the efficiency of education delivery in SD68. These "models" included:

1. *Extending the number of school hours in a day*
 2. *Lengthening the school year*
 3. *Establishing a four quarter semester system*
 4. *Providing more home-schooling/out-of-school programs*
- As highlighted in Table 10, there were significant differences in opinion with respect to various operational options being considered by the Nanaimo School District. For example, whereas 20.9% of parents indicated, on a first choice basis, that the District should lengthen the school year, only 8.6% of staff (4.9% of teachers) cited a longer school year as their first choice in promoting flexibility in SD68.
 - No single alternative received overwhelming support. Although more than 40% of SD68 staff were in favour of establishing a year-round quarterly semester system, only 25.5% of parents (20.2% of elementary parents) noted this option as their first choice. Alternatives receiving less support included home-schooling (17.0%) and the provision for a longer school year (14.5%).

Table 10
Support for Options to Increase Flexibility in SD68
Proportion Cited on a First Choice Basis by Target Group

Suggested alternative:

Group/Alternative	Longer School Day	Longer School Year	Quarterly Semester	Home-Schooling
Parents:				
Elementary	31.5%	21.5%	20.2%	18.1%
Secondary	25.6%	20.0%	34.4%	14.8%
Parent Average	29.3%	20.9%	25.5%	16.9%
Inst. staff	21.1%	4.9%	43.3%	19.8%
A.O.'s	17.2%	6.9%	58.3%	31.8%
Support/Other	28.1%	16.2%	29.5%	13.9%
Staff Average	23.0%	8.6%	40.2%	17.0%
SD68 Average	26.0%	14.5%	33.2%	17.0%

n = 1,061

Note: Totals may not add to 100 because of missing data and/or multiple response

15. RESPONDENT COMMENTS

- There was keen interest regarding the educational environment in SD68. Of the 4,366 surveys completed, almost one-half (48.8%) contained additional comments.
- SD68 staff were also asked to comment on what changes could be implemented to enhance their satisfaction with their job in the District. Most commonly cited changes (19.6%) included smaller class sizes or changes to classroom composition, reduction of the workload and/or increase in the amount of preparation time (16.6%), greater recognition of staff efforts (6.1%) or reduction in the number of administrative officers (5.0%). As this was an open-ended question, there was a range of options identified by SD68 employees.

16. SURVEY PARTICIPATION

- There was considerable interest regarding the educational system in SD68, as indicated by the high response rate (66.0%) and the substantial number of comments provided by respondents.

TECHNICAL ASPECTS

1. Survey Design

The *Decisions for a Decade Survey* was commissioned to attain two primary objectives: first, to define and assess attitudes about education for a range of respondent groups (students, parents, the public, the business community, recent graduates and SD68 staff) encompassed within SD68; and second, to provide a vehicle by which the District could evaluate educational options among the various target groups to enable the District to meet the needs and requirements of the community.

Given the scope of the research objectives and diversity of the sampling frame, nine different surveys were developed. While not all groups were required to answer the same number or type of questions, there were several questions common to most surveys. The design of the various survey instruments entailed considerable discussion with the Decisions for a Decade Steering Committee, as well as field testing with all groups prior to the administration of the survey to the respective target populations.

2. Survey Delivery

The sample consisted of randomly selected respondents from four major target groups in SD68: students (elementary and secondary), parents of children in either an elementary or secondary school, SD68 staff (teaching, administrative officers, non-teaching and itinerant teachers), and the community including the general public (parents/non-parents - adults who do not have children in the public school system), the business and professional community, and recent graduates of the Nanaimo School District.

Generally, most surveys were administered by personnel of R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. In those cases where District distribution systems were used, every effort was made to minimize the possibility of the identification of, or influence on, the respondent by supervisory staff members.

2.1 Parents

The parent sample consisted of randomly selected respondents from two survey strata: parents who had children in an elementary school, and parents who had children in a secondary school. Approximately 1,000 parents whose children attended an elementary school in SD68 were forwarded a

survey, as were 1,000 parents with a child in a secondary school in the District. Because parents were randomly chosen, however, it was possible that a household could have received more than one survey if in that household there were children attending more than one school (e.g. children attending elementary and secondary schools) in the District. The duplication of surveys might have accounted for the relatively lower response rate for parents who had children in both an elementary and secondary school.

In November 1990, survey kits containing a distribution envelope, covering letter, questionnaire and return envelope were forwarded to designated parents of children in an elementary school. Students delivered and returned the completed questionnaires. Completed questionnaires were returned in a sealed envelope and were forwarded - unopened - to the consultant for data processing and analysis. For parents of children in a secondary school, the surveys were mailed directly to the household, and respondents were asked to complete and mail the surveys to the Consultant in a supplied postage-paid return envelope. Of the 2,000 parent distributed to parents, 985 completed surveys were returned. After adjusting for people who had moved, the valid response rate was 50.6 percent which is comparable to response rates attained in similar surveys of parents undertaken by the Consultant for other districts within British Columbia.

2.2 Staff

To allow for equitable participation of all employees in the survey, it was decided that the staff survey would encompass all employees currently working for the District. Employees in every job classification and all work locations were included. As with the elementary parent survey, all staff members received a survey kit (mail-out envelope, covering letter, questionnaire and return envelope) that was distributed and collected at each work location. Each completed questionnaire was returned in a sealed return envelope to the project consultants for data processing and analysis. Of the 1,181 surveys distributed to staff, 1,064 (90.1%) were returned for data processing. In addition, every fourth staff survey kit contained an additional questionnaire about educational goals and achievement in SD68. Of the 300 respondents who received this second survey, completed surveys were returned by 144 or 49.7% of respondents.

2.3 Students

More than 1,900 students were randomly selected to participate in the *Decisions for a Decade Survey*. To minimize any bias that might be introduced in having teachers or District staff administer the survey, student surveys were administered by R.A.M. personnel in each school. As a result of the cooperation provided by the respective schools, there was an extremely high number of valid surveys obtained: 665 elementary (Grades 5 to 7) and 1,278 secondary surveys.

2.4 Community

To ascertain the opinion of the general community, the consultant randomly selected 494 names from Dominion Directory and from the B.C. Voter's List for the public opinion survey. Prior to the administration of the telephone survey, these persons were mailed a pre-survey "information kit" outlining the nature and purpose of the telephone survey. After adjusting for individuals who could not be contacted (moved or telephone number no longer in service), a valid response rate of 72.7% was obtained for the public opinion survey.

In addition to the general public survey, the Consultant undertook a survey of 244 businesses randomly selected from the B.C. Telephone Directory Yellow Pages, as well as 185 students who had recently graduated from SD68. The valid response rates for the business/professional and recent graduates were 71.0% and 79.8% respectively.

3. Response Rates

As highlighted in Table A, the response rates varied considerably across the survey strata. Although the return rate for graduates (79.8%) and staff (90.3%) was very high, the response among parents whose children were in secondary schools (37.4%) was markedly lower. This lower response rate could be reflective of households returning only one survey despite receiving two or three. Nevertheless, almost two-thirds (66.0%) of all people contacted participated in the *Decisions for a Decade Survey*.

Table A
Response Rate
by Target Group

Respondent Group	# Surveys Distributed	# Surveys Returned	# Survey N/A ¹	Valid Response Rate
Elementary Students	Intercept	665	—	N/A
Secondary Students	Intercept	1,278	—	N/A
Total Students	N/A	1,943	—	N/A
Elementary Parents	1,000	624	16	63.4%
Secondary Parents	1,000	361	36	37.4%
Total Parents	2,000	985	52	50.6%
Total SD68 Staff	1,200	1,064	19	90.1%
Staff- Educ. Goals	300	149	—	49.7%
Community	494	335	33	72.7%
Business/Professionals	244	156	23	71.0%
Recent Graduates	185	134	17	79.8%
Overall Response Rate²	4,423	2,823	144	66.0%

¹Refers to those respondents who could not be contacted because of a not-in-service telephone number, a wrong number, or respondents were away (i.e. on holidays, at university, etc.)

²Excludes student intercept surveys. Including student surveys the total number of responses in 4616.

4. Abbreviations

In the presentation of the results obtained, the following abbreviations have been used:

S/Elem	- Students in an elementary school
S/Sec'd	- Students in a secondary school
P/Elem	- Parents with children in an elementary school
P/Sec'd	- Parents with children in a secondary school
Parents	- Average - all parents surveyed
A.O.'s	- Administrative Officers (Staff Survey)

Inst.	- SD68 Instructional (teaching) staff
Supp./Other	- C.U.P.E. staff (Non-Teaching staff)/Other SD68 staff
Staff	- Average - all staff surveyed
SD68	- Average - average of all groups surveyed (unweighted)
Non-Par.	- Non-Parents - Public Survey
Grads	- Recent Graduates
Bus/Pro	- Business/Professional Community Survey
Avg.	- Average
D-Care	- Day-care
S-Care	- Student-care

For the discussion of sample characteristics, the sample total (SD68) refers to the data of the particular sample obtained and has not been weighted.

5. Report Structure

Information obtained from the 1990 *Decisions for a Decade Survey* is presented in four reports:

1. Summary Report: Highlights the key findings of the *Decisions for a Decade Survey* including, where applicable, cross-group comparisons of responses.
2. Background Reports: Detailed reports were prepared for each sub-committee. These background reports are as follows: (a) Personnel Resources, (b) Material Resources, (c) Community Resources, (d) Program Resources.
3. Technical Appendix: Summary statistics for all nine survey groups are presented in tabular form. In addition, the technical appendix contains copies of the questionnaires used and information letters that preceded the telephone surveys.
4. Respondent Comments: This report contains all comments provided by each respondent group.

6. Sample Characteristics - Public Sample

As highlighted in the following tables, the data obtained from the *Community Opinion Survey* (Parent/Non-Parent Survey) is reflective of the demographic profile of the population encompassed within the Nanaimo School District. The demographic profile of the District has been estimated using 1986 Census information (latest available data).

Table B - Age Distribution

Age	Public Sample	Estimated Actual - SD68
19 - 34 years	33.4%	29.7%
35 - 54 years	34.6%	33.1%
55 - 64 years	12.5%	16.1%
65+ years	19.5%	21.1%

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding off and non-response.

Table C - Male/Female Distribution

Sex	Public Sample	Estimated Actual - SD68
Male	43.6%	48.4%
Female	56.4%	51.6%

Table D - Sample Distribution by Tenure

Tenure	Public Sample	Estimated Actual - SD68
Renters	28.7%	29.4%
Owners	71.3%	70.6%

**Table E - Sample Distribution
Highest Level of Education**

Education	Public Sample	Estimated Actual - SD68
Some High School/H.S. Grad	48.7%	51.1%
Some trade/Diploma	23.9%	31.4%
Some University	10.4%	10.4%
University Degree(s)	14.9%	7.1%
Other	2.1%	—

Table F - Regional Distribution

Region	Public Sample	Estimated Actual - SD68
Nanaimo	82.4%	94.9% ¹
Ladysmith	7.8%	5.1%
South Nanaimo	0.9%	N/A
Lantzville	5.4%	N/A
Gabriola Island	1.8%	N/A
Cedar/Other	1.8%	N/A

¹Includes Nanaimo, South Nanaimo, Lantzville, Gabriola Island, Cedar and other regions.

7. Sample Characteristics - Parent/Student Sample

As highlighted in the following tables, there were considerable differences in the demographic and work history profiles across the various survey target groups.

Table G
Sample Characteristics - Parent Group
Sample Size = 985

Characteristic	Elementary Parents	Secondary Parents	Parent Average
% Female	84.6%	74.6%	80.9%
% 19 - 34 years	37.9%	6.7%	26.5%
% 35 - 54 years	61.6%	92.2%	72.8%
% 55+ years	0.5%	1.1%	0.7%
% With Some Univ. Education	29.2%	35.1%	31.4%
% Single Parent	18.5%	16.6%	17.8%
% of Parent Sample	63.4%	36.6%	100.0%

Table H
Sample Characteristics - Student Group
Sample Size = 1,942

Characteristic	Elementary Students	Secondary Students	Student Average
% Female	49.2%	49.0%	49.1%
% with part-time job	N/A	39.6%	N/A
% Spending 10 hours/week or more working	N/A	26.4%	N/A
% Planning to continue to college/university	N/A	80.7%	N/A
% of Student Sample	34.2%	65.8%	100.0%

8. Interpretation of Results

The results obtained in an opinion survey are a cross-section of the actual opinions of the population studied. The use of random sampling techniques allows one to determine the range in which the actual or true proportion would occur. Based on a sample size of 355 households, the estimates derived from the public sample were within a maximum of plus or minus 5.2% of the true value at a 95% confidence level. As the proportion of responses either decreases or increases from the 50% level, the variability or sampling error declines. For example, if 80% of participants had provided the same or similar responses, the maximum variation would have declined to plus or minus 4.1 percent. Outlined in Table I is the allowance for sampling errors (as a percentage), given an estimated proportion.

Table I
Estimates of Sample Error for Proportions
(In Terms of Percentage)
Public Opinion Survey - Sample Size of 355

For Proportions Near	Plus Or Minus Range
Percentages near 10	3.1%
Percentages near 20	4.1%
Percentages near 30	4.7%
Percentages near 40	5.1%
Percentages near 50	5.2%
Percentages near 60	5.1%
Percentages near 70	4.7%
Percentages near 80	4.1%
Percentages near 90	3.1%

When asked, for example, to state whether they were active in the public school system, 24.8% of public respondents indicated that they were active; and 75.2% indicated that they were not actively involved in their school or parent group. From the table, for percentages near 20%, the sampling error is plus or minus 4.1 percent. Thus, 19 times out of 20, (at the 95% confidence level) the actual value will be between 20.7% and 28.9% percent, with the most probable value being 24.8 percent.

The information presented in this table is applicable only when analyzing total public responses; for sub-group responses, the sampling error could increase. Similarly, given the much larger sample associated with the student and parent surveys, the variation associated with the groups was estimated to range from 2.2% to 3.6% for both the parent and student populations.

9. Statistical Differences

In comparing the responses of two groups (for example, instructional and administrative staff), it is necessary to determine whether there exists a statistical difference. Therefore, a Chi-squared test (at the 95% confidence level) was performed. For example, while it might appear that there is a difference in attitudes with respect to co-worker support (35.0% of instructional staff indicated that they were very satisfied with co-worker support, 39.1% of administrative staff were very satisfied with co-worker support), an analysis of responses using the Chi-squared test, at the 95% level of confidence, suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in opinion between these two groups in terms of overall job satisfaction.

10. Interpretation of Scores Used

In general, respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with the listed goal or attribute, on a scale of one to five. Respondents could also indicate that they had insufficient knowledge to comment on the particular question.

Table J
Interpretation of Scores Used to Evaluate the
Importance & Achievement of Education Goals/Other Issues

Value	Agreement with Goal/Attribute listed
1	Strongly Agree
2	Agree
3	Neutral
4	Disagree
5	Strongly Disagree
DK	No Opinion/Don't Know - Response not scored

11. Mean Score Analysis

To reflect the opinions of respondents, a mean score was occasionally calculated for a particular question. Use of a mean score provided a better measure of overall importance or achievement of goals because weights were assigned to each of the five levels. Mean score values were assigned a theoretical maximum of five and minimum of one. The mean score values for most of the issues identified are as follows:

1	= Strongly Disagree
2	= Disagree
3	= Neutral
4	= Agree
5	= Strongly Agree
DK	= No Opinion/Don't Know - response not scored

It should be noted that for some issues, mean scores have been developed on a 1 to 4 scale. In these instances, the particular table will indicate theoretical maximum and minimum values associated with the specific issue under examination.

It must be emphasized that the mean score values represent the "average" only for those respondents who had an opinion. Care must be taken in the interpretation of mean score values when the proportion of undecided respondents becomes very high. Although the subject might have a very high mean score value, this score might represent the opinion of only a portion of the surveyed population.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The *Summary Report* consists of three major parts: **District Analysis** - a cross-sectional comparison of educational issues common to most groups, **Target Group Analysis** - to ascertain key issues and trends among each of the groups surveyed, and **Respondent Comments** - the classification and interpretation of the considerable volume of comments in response to this research project.

A. DISTRICT ANALYSIS

1. *General Satisfaction with SD68*
2. *Views on SD68 Performance in Selected Areas*
3. *Views on District Communication*
4. *Educational Options in SD68*

B. TARGET GROUP ANALYSIS

5. *Elementary/Secondary Students*
6. *Parents/Public/Business & Professional Community*
7. *Recent Graduates*
8. *SD68 Employees (Teaching, Administrative, and Non-Teaching Staff)*

The objective of the **District Analysis** section was to compare the opinions of the various target groups and identify what differences, if any, exist between each group. This analysis should provide insight into relative levels of satisfaction across the various "users" and "non-users" of the education services provided by SD68. The focus of the second section, **Target Group Analysis**, was to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the District among the various user groups, and identify those areas for which there was a considerable difference in opinion. Classification and presentation of respondent comments are also included in this section of the report.

This report provides a synopsis of survey results. More detailed information is contained in the four background reports. These background reports include:

- Volume 1: *Personnel Issues*
- Volume 2: *Material Resources Issues*
- Volume 3: *Community Issues*
- Volume 4: *Program Resources Issues*

Information contained in each of the four background reports is as follows:

Volume 1: Personnel Issues

Includes key information obtained from the survey of all employees as well as relevant data from parents, student, public and recent graduate surveys as it pertains to SD68 staff.

Volume 2: Material Resources Issues

Data about facilities and resources, pertaining to issues in SD68, contained in the *Material Resources Report* has been consolidated from surveys administered to students, parents and staff.

Volume 3: Community Issues

The *Community Issues Report* is a synthesis of the information secured through the survey of the general public and business community.

Volume 4: Program Resources Issues

Key curriculum issues, as identified in a special survey of SD68 staff, are highlighted in this report. In addition, this report incorporates some of the data obtained from surveys of students, parents and recent graduates.

A. DISTRICT ANALYSIS

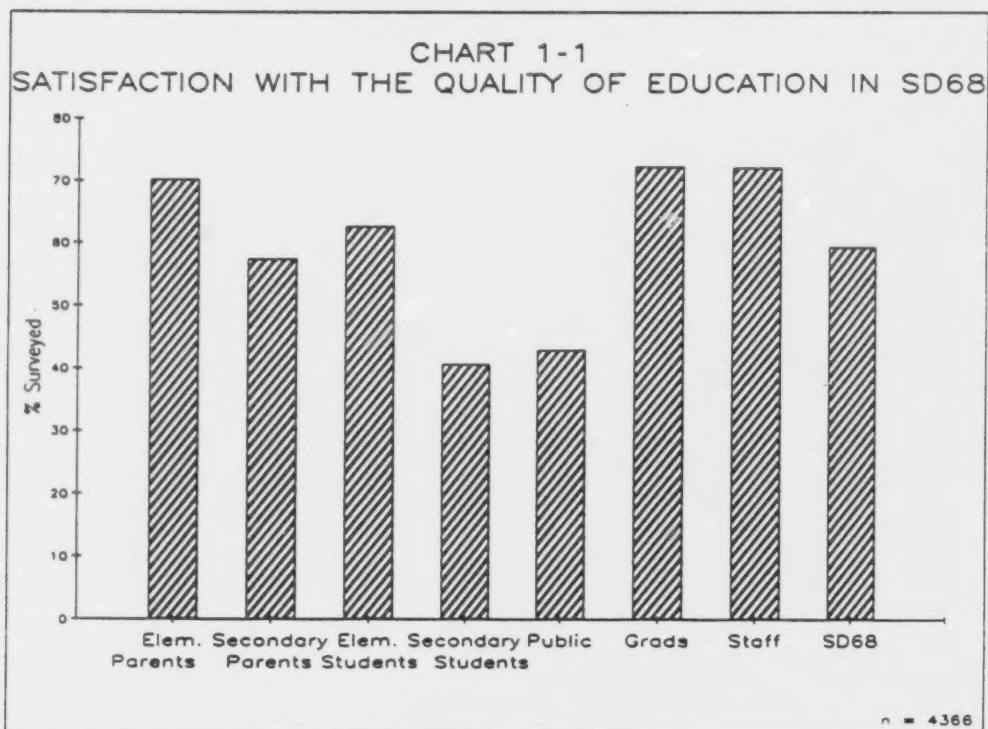
A. DISTRICT ANALYSIS

SECTION 1: GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH SD68

1.1 General Quality of Education In SD68

For most surveys, respondents were asked to grade the quality of education provided by either their local school or the District in general. As highlighted in Chart 1-1, the general level of satisfaction ranged from 72.4% among SD68 graduates to 43% among the general public. After combining the results of the various target groups, it was found that among the 4,366 adult respondents:

- 59.3% were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of education provided
- 18.3% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied
- 15.8% were neutral in their response
- 6.6% had no opinion about the performance of their school or District



As highlighted in Table 1-1, the results of the survey suggest that there is general support for the work being done in the District. When asked to "rate" the quality of education in both School District 68 and the province, respondents rated the quality of education in SD68 to be better than in the rest of British Columbia. In addition, individuals felt that their particular school was doing considerably better than schools elsewhere in either the District or province.

Table 1-1
Comparison of Respondent Satisfaction¹
with Quality of Education Provided
Selected Groups

Group	School	SD68	B.C.	SD68 - B.C.
P/Elem	70.3%	41.0%	33.8%	+7.2%
P/Sec'd	57.4%	42.1%	34.9%	+7.2%
Parent Average	65.6%	41.4%	34.2%	+7.2%
Inst.	79.3%	80.0%	73.0%	+7.0%
A.O.'s	79.7%	90.9%	84.8%	+6.1%
Supp./Other	55.8%	67.0%	55.5%	+11.5%
Staff Average	72.2%	77.1%	69.0%	+8.9%
Public	43.0%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduates	72.4%	N/A	N/A	N/A
SD68 Average	59.3%	59.2%	51.6%	+7.6%

¹% Agree/Strongly Agree

- Consistent with recent provincial surveys, respondents in Nanaimo felt that the quality of education provided in their local school district was better than what was offered elsewhere in British Columbia. The difference between the perceived quality of education in SD68 and the remainder of the province was highest among SD68 support staff (difference of 11.5% between the quality of education provided in the District and that of the province), and lowest among A.O.'s (6.1%).

SECTION II: VIEWS ON SD68 PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED AREAS

Although the format of the various questionnaires did not allow for a comparison of respondent opinion among all groups for all questions, it was possible to evaluate those issues that were included for two or more target groups. In general, these issues were classified as follows:

- 2.1 Views on the Learning Environment in SD68
- 2.2 Views on Environmental Policies in SD68
- 2.3 Support for the Introduction of a Day-Care/Students-Care Program
- 2.4 General Satisfaction with SD68 Staff
- 2.5 Effectiveness in Preparing Students for Work or Advanced Education
- 2.6 Views on SD68 Facilities

2.1 Views on the Learning Environment in SD68

The various surveys contained several questions designed to ascertain the extent to which students, parents and staff felt that the educational "environment" in Nanaimo was conducive to student learning. Respondents were asked to comment on the extent to which they felt the school and/or District promoted positive student behaviour, fostered student ability to interact in a multicultural society, ensured students safety and promoted academic achievement. Survey results reveal:

- As depicted in Table 2-1, the majority (69.3%) of students and parents agree or strongly agree that their school promotes positive student behaviour.
- Although parents (79.2%) generally agreed that children attending SD68 were secure in their personal and physical well-being, a lower proportion of elementary (65.2%) and secondary (59.3%) students were of the same opinion.
- Parents were less satisfied with the emphasis placed on academic achievement in their child's school. Little more than one-half (54.7%) of parents agreed that their school placed appropriate emphasis on student academic achievement. More than one-third (35.4%) of parents surveyed were neutral or undecided in their opinion regarding the academic priority of their child's school.
- 48.1 percent of parents surveyed were satisfied with school multicultural programs and 41.3% provided either a neutral response (24.1%) or had no opinion (17.2%) on this issue.

Table 2-1
Views on the Learning Environment in SD68

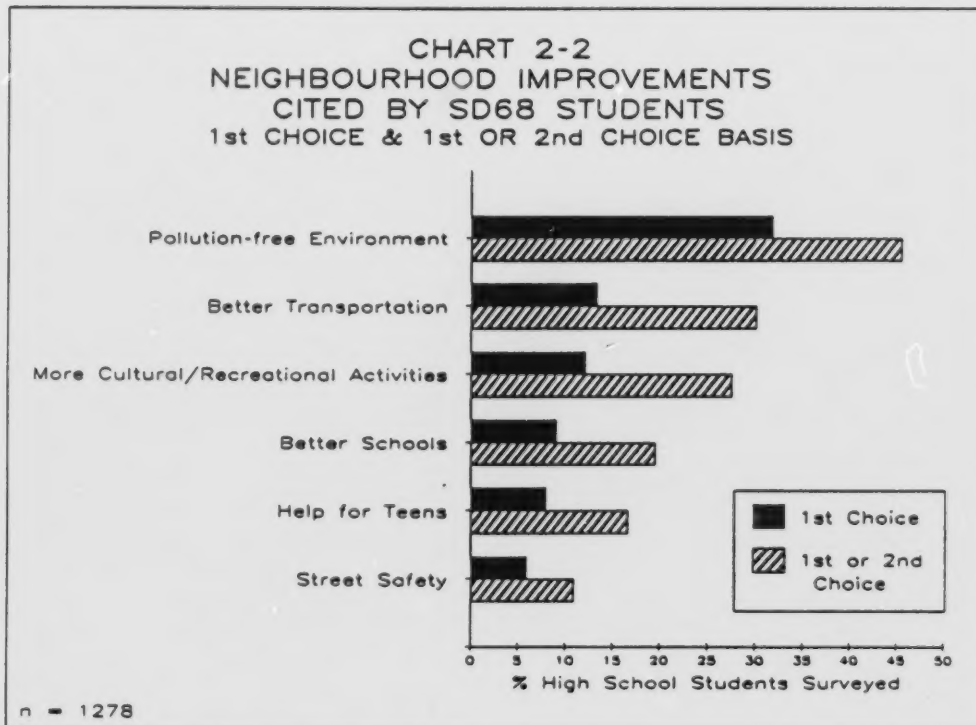
% Agree or Strongly Agree:

Group/Area	School Promotes Positive Student Be- haviour	Child Feels Safe at School	Academic Ach. High Priority	Promote Multicult. Awareness
Students:				
Elementary	79.0%	65.2%	N/A	N/A
Secondary	59.2%	59.3%	N/A	N/A
Student Avg.	66.0%	61.4%	N/A	N/A
Parents:				
Elementary	81.7%	83.8%	54.5%	49.0%
Secondary	66.2%	71.2%	54.8%	43.2%
Parent Avg.	76.1%	79.2%	54.7%	48.1%
SD68 Avg.	69.3%	67.3%	54.7%	48.1%

2.2 Views on Environmental Policies in SD68

Participants in several target groups (students, parents, the public, recent graduates, and staff) were asked several questions pertaining to environmental programs and policies in SD68. In analyzing the responses of various groups, it is apparent that there is considerable diversity of opinion about environmental issues in the Nanaimo region. For example:

- Among parent, public and recent graduate respondents, more than three-quarters (75.4%) of those surveyed agreed (57.2%) or strongly agreed (18.2%) that the District was doing a good job in teaching students respect for, and an awareness of, the environment. Less than 10% of respondents indicated that the District was doing a poor (7.8%) or very poor (1.9%) job addressing this concern.
- SD68 secondary students were asked to indicate what neighbourhood improvements could be initiated to improve the quality of life in the region in which they lived. As highlighted in Chart 2-2, SD68 secondary students placed more emphasis on the requirement for a pollution-free environment (31.9% of students stated that this was their foremost concern, 45.6% cited this as either their first or second area requiring improvement) than on improved transportation (13.4% - 1st, 30.2% - 1st or 2nd), enhancement of cultural/recreational facilities (12.2% and 27.6%) or better schools (9.1% and 19.6%).



2.3 Support for the Introduction of Day-Care/Student-Care Programs in SD68

An analysis of respondent's attitudes concerning the introduction of day-care/student-care programs in SD68 reveals an almost equal division in opinion.

- Approximately 43% of staff and public respondents were supportive of the District's establishing both a day-care and student-care program (29.2%), a day-care program only (8.4%) or a student-care program (5.1%) only. 35.7 percent of respondents were opposed to the District's establishing such programs; and 21.6% of respondents had no opinion with respect to the provision of such services in SD68 schools.
- Public respondents tended to be more vocal in their opposition to such a program, as 43.0% of public respondents were against the establishment of such programs in SD68 schools.
- There was little difference in opinion among SD68 staff on the basis of job classification, although A.O.'s were slightly more positive (51.5%) about the provision of such services than were instructional (39.8%) or support staff (41.7%).

Table 2-3
Support for Day-Care/Student-Care Programs
in SD68

% Supporting:

Group/View	Both	D-Care Only	S-Care Only	Neither	No Opin/ No Resp
Public	38.5%	6.6%	2.4%	43.0%	9.6%
Inst.	26.7%	8.1%	5.0%	33.9%	26.3%
A.O.'s	25.0%	10.9%	15.6%	34.4%	14.1%
Supp/Other	25.3%	10.5%	5.9%	31.9%	26.3%
Staff Avg.	26.2%	9.0%	6.0%	33.3%	25.5%
SD68	29.2%	8.4%	5.1%	35.7%	21.6%

n = 1,358

- Among public respondents, there was no significant differences in opinion on the basis of whether the respondent had a child attending a school in SD68 (parent/non-parent), geographic location, gender or highest level of education.

2.4 General Satisfaction with SD68 Staff

Respondents were asked to comment on the work of teachers and school-based administrative staff. As highlighted in Chart 2-4 and Table 2-4A, respondents expressed greater relative satisfaction with the teaching ability of teachers than with teacher involvement in extra-curricular activities or the performance of school-based administrators.

- Parents with children in an elementary school were generally more satisfied with SD68 staff than were secondary students or parents. Respondents in all groups assigned lower marks to teacher involvement in extra-curricular activities than to the teaching ability of teachers.

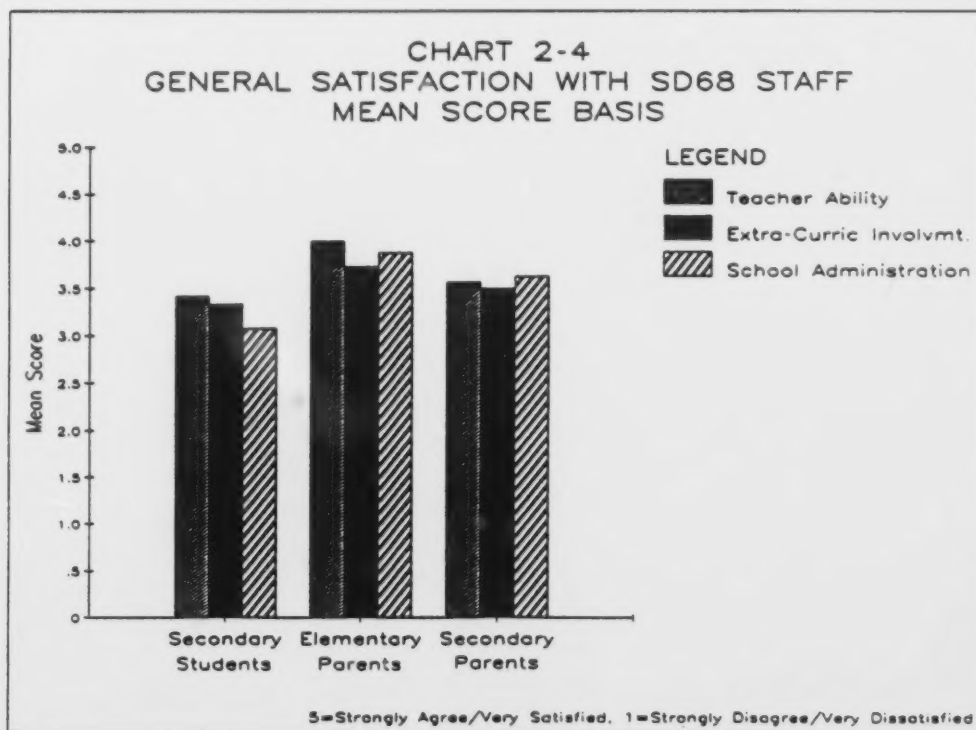


Table 2-4A
Satisfaction with SD68 Teachers/School Administration
by Target Group

% Agree/Strongly Agree:

Group/Area	Teachers' Teaching Ability	Teachers' Extra-Curric. Involvement	School Admin
Secondary Students	51.0%	40.4%	34.5%
Elementary Parents	81.9%	58.9%	76.2%
Secondary Parents	60.1%	46.7%	63.2%
Parent Average	73.9%	54.4%	71.5%
Public	59.7%	N/A	N/A
SD68 Average	60.8%	46.5%	50.5%

n = 2,597

- In general, parents were very satisfied with the availability of their child's teacher as 91.8% of elementary and 81.1% of secondary parents indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of their child's teacher when required. Parents were less satisfied with the extent to which teachers recognized the individual learning needs of their respective child(ren). Only 54.0% of elementary parents and 23.9% of secondary parents agreed that the individual learning needs of their children were being met.

Table 2-4B
Satisfaction with SD68 Teachers - Parents with Children in SD68 Schools
Selected Issues

% Agree/Strongly Agree that:

Group/Issue	Teacher Recognizes Individual Learning Needs	Teacher Available When Needed
Elementary Parents	54.0%	91.8%
Secondary Parents	23.9%	81.1%
Male	35.8%	86.4%
Female	44.2%	88.5%
Aged 20-34 years	54.5%	90.7%
Aged 35-54 years	38.5%	87.2%

Table 2-4B (Cont.)
Satisfaction with SD68 Teachers - Parents with Children in SD68 Schools
Selected Issues

% Agree/Strongly Agree that:

Group/Issue	Teacher Recognizes Individual Learning Needs	Teacher Available When Needed
Highest Level of Education:		
0 - 11 years	48.8%	82.5%
High school graduate	39.8%	86.1%
Some Post-Sec'd education	45.7%	88.6%
University degree(s)	35.8%	93.7%
Other	46.1%	74.4%
SD68 Average	43.0%	87.9%

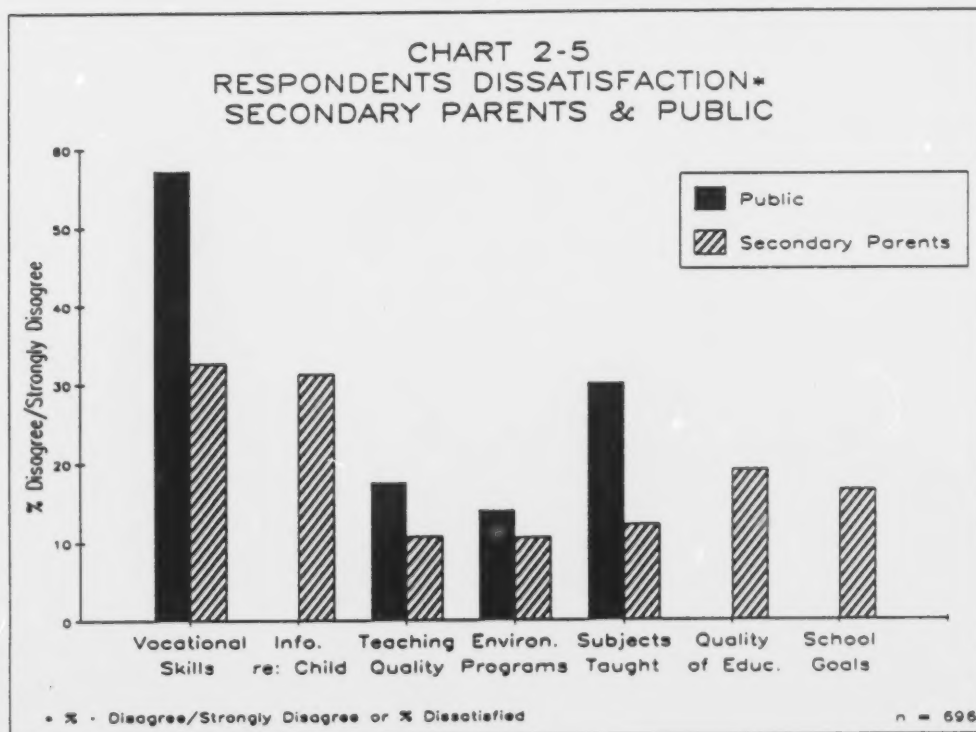
n = 985

2.5 Effectiveness In Preparing Students for Work or Advanced Education

To evaluate the extent to which SD68 prepared students for advanced education or paid employment, secondary students, parents, the public, recent graduates and the business/professional community were asked to comment on one or more of the following:

1. Extent to which SD68 prepared student for work/advanced education
 2. Views on decision-making skills of SD68 graduates
 3. Adequacy of employment skills
 4. Perceived usefulness of school courses for future career/education
- Survey results suggest that there are considerable differences in opinion with respect to the ability of SD68 graduates to function effectively in the workplace. Whereas almost three-quarters (72.4%) of graduates indicated that the District had prepared them very well (14.2%) or adequately (58.2%) for advanced education or paid employment, a much lower proportion of secondary parents (24.4%) were of the same opinion.
 - Among the business/professional community, respondents were most critical of SD68 graduates' decision-making skills, as only 40.4% of businesses were satisfied or very satisfied with the decision-making skills of SD68 graduates. Similarly, business respondents assigned low scores to graduates' reading and writing abilities: more than 40% of businesses contacted were dissatisfied (31.4%) or very dissatisfied (9.0%) with SD68 students' reading and writing skills.
 - Businesses in Nanaimo were generally positive in their opinion about the adaptability of graduates in the workplace; 69.2% of businesses surveyed were satisfied (62.1%) or very satisfied (7.1%) with the ease with which students adapted to the workplace.
 - Business respondents (94.2%) placed considerable emphasis on graduates having a basic working knowledge of computers. Similarly, a large proportion (88.5%) of businesses were supportive of partnerships with schools; and more than 90% of firms indicated that businesses should be more willing to accept students for work education programs.
 - 21.2% of public respondents contacted indicated that they thought SD68 graduates had the necessary vocational skills for the workplace. In contrast, more than one-half (57.3%) of public participants indicated that they were dissatisfied (38.2%) or very dissatisfied (19.1%) with the vocational skills provided to SD68 graduates. The inadequacy of vocational skills among students graduating from Nanaimo schools is a major concern among public respondents contacted for this research.

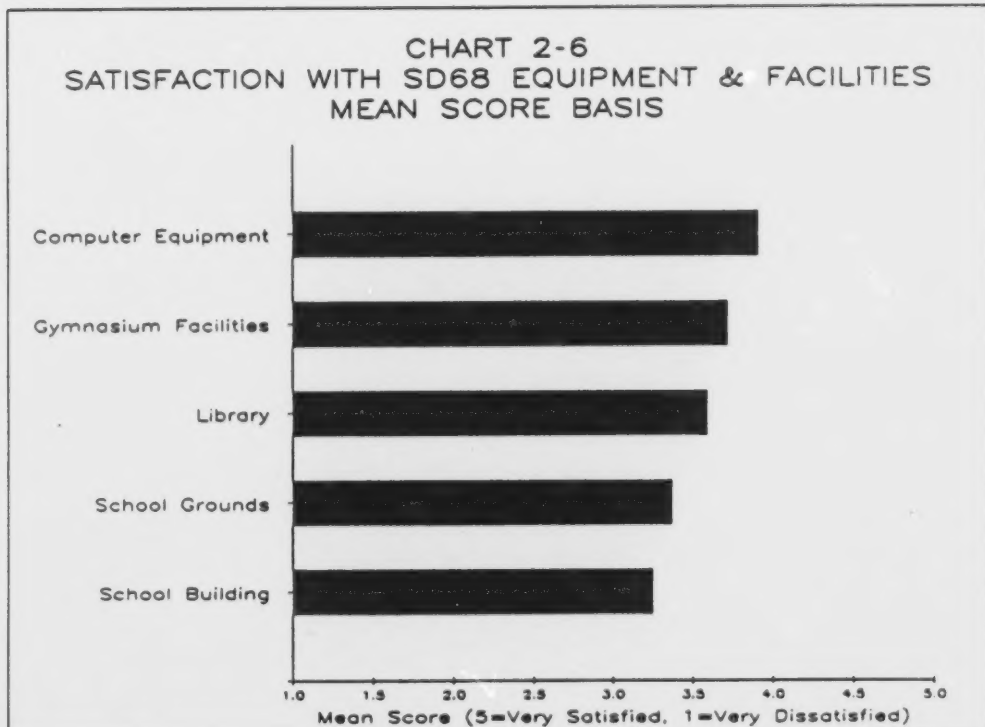
- Vocational issues are of major concern among secondary parents and public respondents in SD68. As highlighted in Chart 2-5, dissatisfaction with the work skills provided to SD68 students was considerably higher than dissatisfaction with other curricular issues, communication, quality of teachers or the general quality of education in the District.



2.6 Views on SD68 Facilities

Most groups were asked to comment on their satisfaction with District facilities. Survey results indicate:

- Of the 3,397 students, parents and recent graduates surveyed, satisfaction with SD68 facilities was highest for the District's equipment; however, satisfaction with school grounds and buildings was considerably lower.
- On a mean score basis (with 5 representing very satisfied and 1 representing very dissatisfied), respondent satisfaction with SD68 was between a neutral (3) and a satisfied (4) response. Respondents were generally more satisfied with the "internal" facilities provided in SD68 schools (computers, gymnasium facilities, library) than with "external" facilities such as the school building and/or grounds.



- It is interesting to note the considerable differences across groups. For example, while more than one-quarter (26.0%) of students were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with school grounds, only 13.4% of parents were of the same opinion. All groups, however, expressed similar dissatisfaction with SD68 buildings, as approximately one-quarter (24.4%) of respondents surveyed were dissatisfied with the school building(s).

Table 2-6
Satisfaction with District Facilities
by Respondent Group
Mean Score Basis¹

% Dissatisfied/Very Dissatisfied with School:

Group/Area	Library	Grounds	Building	Gym	Computers
Elementary Students	15.0%	25.0%	20.9%	8.5%	8.2%
Secondary Students	15.2%	26.7%	28.6%	19.1%	9.6%
Students Average	15.1%	26.0%	26.0%	15.4%	9.0%
Elementary Parents	13.6%	15.4%	20.7%	N/A	N/A
Secondary Parents	14.7%	10.0%	26.1%	N/A	N/A
Parents Average	14.1%	13.4%	22.6%	N/A	N/A
Graduates	12.7%	5.9%	16.4%	13.4%	N/A
Staff	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	38.5%
SD68 Average	14.7%	21.1%	24.4%	15.3%	N/A

- Parent and staff respondents were asked to identify spending priorities should the District raise additional funds from increased taxation. Of the approximately 1,900 respondents, almost one-half (45.9%) stated that school facilities should be upgraded either as their first (15.1%) or second (30.8%) choice. A.O.'s were most concerned about upgrading school/District facilities, as 58.5% felt that increased funding should be directed to facilities upgrading on either a first (18.5%) or second (40.0%) choice basis.

SECTION III: VIEWS ON DISTRICT COMMUNICATION

Respondents in most of the target groups were asked questions designed to ascertain opinion with respect to communication between the school and parents, or communication between the District and its component staff groups.

Parents who had children in an elementary and/or secondary school, were requested to indicate their satisfaction with the following:

1. Information received about their child's learning progress
2. Information received about the school events, programs and accomplishments
3. Ease with which parents could contact teachers
4. Welcome received when parents visited the school

For the community survey, questions were asked to determine what information sources (newspaper, radio and T.V.) were used by the respondents in forming an opinion about the public school system. The public and business participants were also asked about the District's effectiveness in providing the community with information.

SD68 employees were also asked to indicate their satisfaction with their communication with the District and Board of Trustees, and the receptiveness of the District staff to employee concerns.

3.1 School/Teacher Communication with Parents

In general, it appears that the District has done a good job in fostering communication with parents as more than one-half of all parents were satisfied or very satisfied with the communication and information received about their child's learning and school events, programs and accomplishments. Parents were also very supportive of the accessibility of teachers as more than 85% of parents agreed (51.4%) or strongly agreed (36.5%) with the statement that parents could easily contact their child's teacher when necessary.

As highlighted in Table 3-1, while the majority of parents whose children were in either an elementary or secondary school were very satisfied with school/teacher communication, elementary parents were considerably more satisfied with school/teacher communication than were parents whose children attended a secondary school. On average, 81.6% of elementary parents were satisfied or very satisfied with school/teacher communication for the four areas addressed and 68.3% of secondary parents were of the same opinion.

Table 3-1
Parental Satisfaction¹ with School/Teacher Communication
Selected Areas

Area/Group	Elementary Parents	Secondary Parents	SD68
Information about child's learning progress	62.0%	51.8%	58.3%
School welcome	90.4%	78.4%	86.0%
School information - programs/events/etc.	82.2%	62.0%	74.9%
Ease of contact: parent/teacher	91.8%	81.1%	87.9%
Average: four areas	81.6%	68.3%	76.0%

¹Percent Agree or Strongly Agree
n = 985

3.2 Community Sources of Information Concerning Education in SD68

For the community survey, respondents were to evaluate the various sources: personal contact, newspapers, radio/T.V., etc., from which they received information about the District. As highlighted in Chart 3-2, the primary source of information for the public in SD68 was through personal contact - whether with the School District (2.4%), students (27.8%), staff (12.5%) or parents (8.1%). Only 5.4% of respondents indicated that they obtained their information about SD68 primarily through public forums (0.9%) or SD68 publications or school newsletters (4.5%). In comparison, 29.3% of public respondents indicated that their primary source of information about the School District was the mass media (T.V., radio, newspapers). As highlighted in Table 3-2, mass media sources were even more important among the "non-parent" group, as more than one-third (37.1%) of non-parents cited mass media sources as their primary source of information about the District.

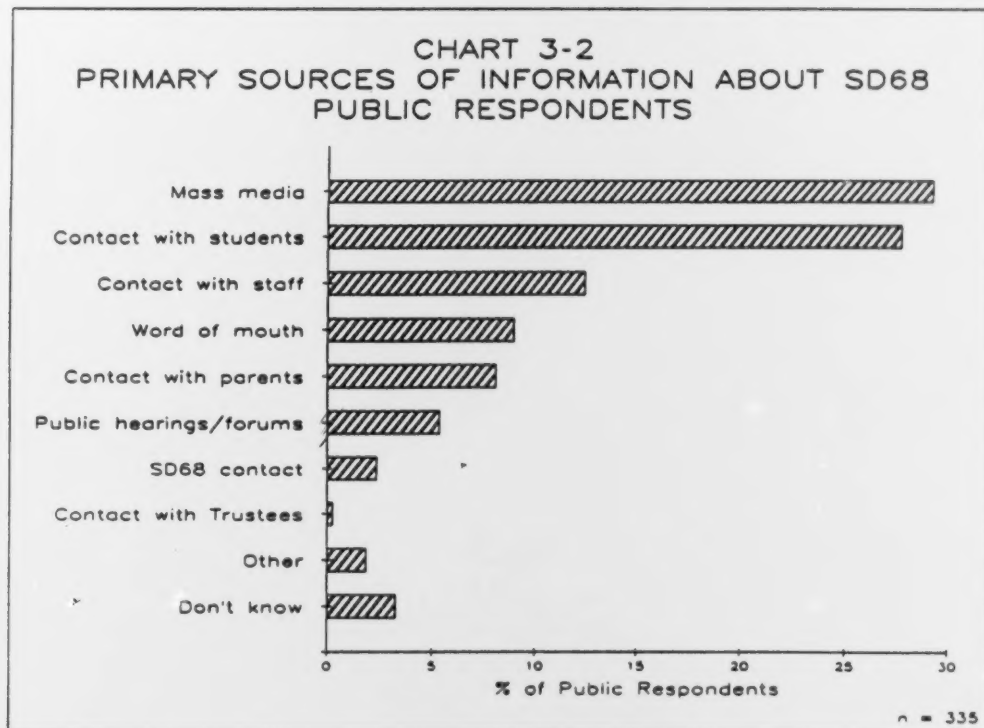


Table 3-2
Primary Source Of Information Upon Which Opinions Are Based
by Respondent Group

Information Source	Parent	Non-Parent	Public Average
Mass media	10.2%	37.1%	29.3%
Contact with students	41.8%	21.9%	27.8%
Staff contact	20.4%	9.7%	12.5%
Word of mouth	2.0%	11.8%	9.0%
Contact with parents	4.1%	9.7%	8.1%
Public meetings/forums	14.3%	0.4%	5.4%
SD68 contact	4.1%	1.7%	2.4%
Contact with trustees	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%
No Opinion/Don't Know	0.0%	4.6%	3.3%
Other	2.5%	6.1%	1.9%
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

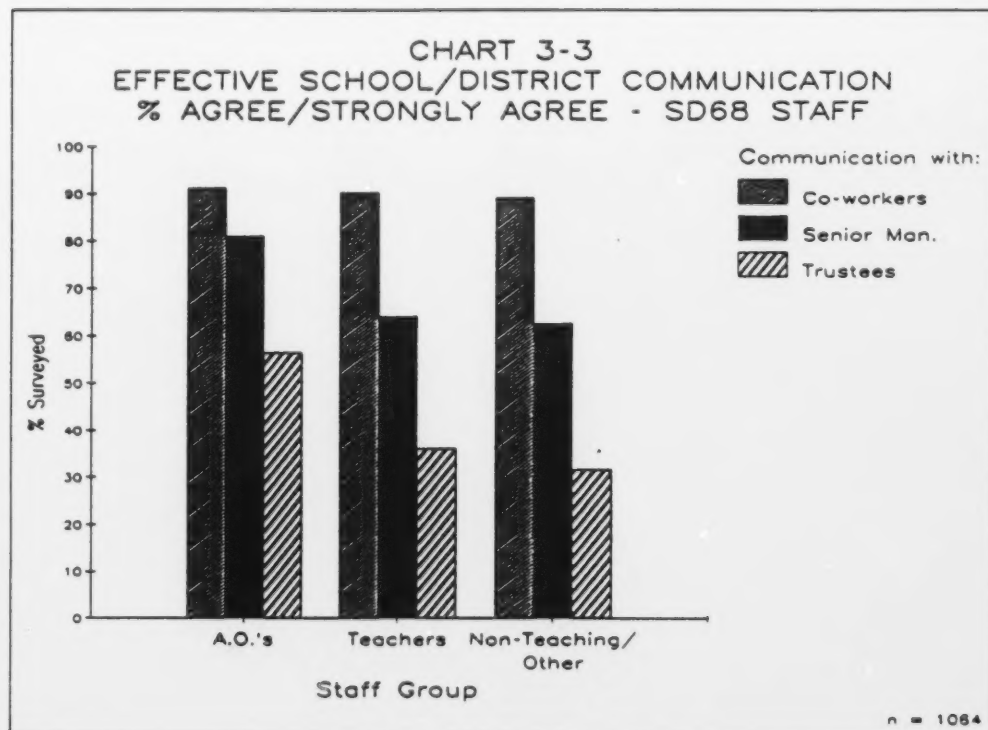
n = 358

- As highlighted in Table 3-2, in contrast to the 18.4% of parents who regularly obtained their information through direct contact with the District (SD68 publications, school newsletters or District meetings), only 2.1% of non-parents use District information sources when forming their opinions about the District. Almost one-half (48.9%) of non-parents indicated that they obtained their information about the District from mass media sources (37.1%) or by word of mouth (11.8%).
- There were no significant differences in sources of information used on the basis of respondent location or highest level of education.

3.3 School/District Communication with SD68 Employees

Questions were included in the staff survey to determine staff satisfaction with the communication both within their school and with District administration and trustees. In general, administrative staff was the group most satisfied with the level of communication in SD68, as a higher proportion of this group was satisfied with communication between senior management and A.O.'s (81.2% of A.O.'s felt that such communication was satisfactory or very satisfactory) and between A.O.'s and the Board of Trustees (56.5%). Only 36.2% of teachers were satisfied with their communication with trustees.

Most respondents rated the communication within their school as being better than the communication with District staff or trustees. As highlighted in Chart 3-3, the majority of teachers (90.3%) and non-teaching staff (89.2%) were satisfied or very satisfied with their communication with their co-workers.



SECTION IV: EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS IN SD68

An integral element in the *Decisions for a Decade Survey* was to provide the District with a better appreciation of the attitudes towards identified educational options in the Nanaimo School District. In this context, questions were developed to provide the District with information in four key areas:

- 4.1 Educational Orientation of the District
- 4.2 Importance of District Leadership in Social & Community Areas
- 4.3 Opinion About Proposed Funding Allocations
- 4.4 Operating Considerations in SD68

While all respondents were asked to comment on the preferred educational orientation the District should pursue during the next ten years, questions pertaining to educational goals, funding allocations and alternatives were limited to secondary students, parents and staff respondents.

4.1 Educational Orientation of the District

Most respondents were asked to identify policies that the District should promote during the next decade. Specifically, participants were asked to rate the importance of the following District options:

1. *Promoting above-average capabilities in reading, writing and arithmetic*
 2. *Promoting above-average problem-solving skills and independent/creative thinking*
 3. *Ensuring students have the necessary vocational/technological skills*
 4. *Ensuring students have adequate social and interpersonal skills*
- As highlighted in Table 4-1, there was a considerable difference in opinion between the various groups in terms of the educational philosophy the District should follow during the next ten years. Although almost one-half (46.1%) of public respondents and 40.3% of businesses indicated that the District should promote above-average student capabilities in the three "R's" (reading, writing, arithmetic), only 15.0% of staff surveyed were of the same opinion. Similarly, there were considerable differences in opinion with respect to the relative importance of problem-solving, vocational and technological skills and social/interpersonal qualities.

Table 4-1
Future Educational Philosophy of SD68
Proportion Indicating Listed Goal as Most Important
by Target Group

Students should have above-average skills in:

Group/Goal	3 "R's"	Problem-Solving	Vocational/ Technical	Social/Interpersonal
Secondary Students	21.1%	20.1%	24.2%	22.3%
Parents:				
Elementary	29.2%	40.6%	18.2%	10.8%
Secondary	26.2%	40.8%	21.1%	11.5%
Parent Average	28.1%	40.6%	19.3%	11.1%

Table 4-1 (Cont.)
Future Educational Philosophy of SD68
Proportion Indicating Listed Goal as Most Important
by Target Group

Students should have above-average skills in:

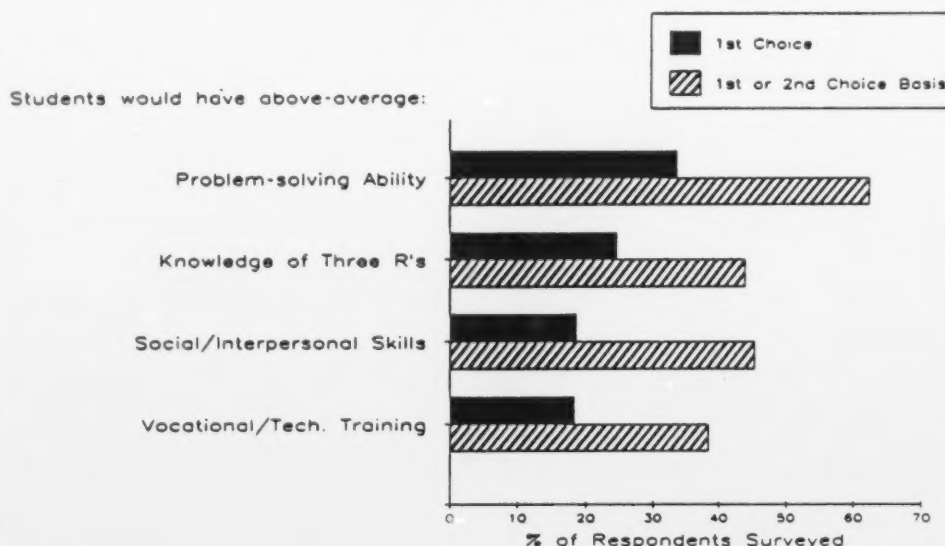
Group/Goal	3 "R's"	Problem-Solving	Vocational/ Technical	Social/Interpersonal
Instructional staff	14.1%	48.7%	7.3%	29.7%
A.O.'s	7.9%	49.2%	7.9%	32.3%
Support/Other	19.0%	38.1%	27.2%	13.4%
Staff Average	15.0%	45.7%	12.9%	25.3%
Community	46.1%	31.2%	13.4%	9.7%
Business	40.3%	29.9%	16.9%	12.4%
Graduates	33.6%	41.0%	10.4%	14.9%
SD68 Average	24.6%	33.7%	18.4%	18.7%

n = 3,642

Note: Totals may add to over 100 because of multiple responses

- It is interesting to note that the inclusion of respondents' second choice does not appreciably alter the overall ranking of the various educational philosophy options identified in the survey. With the exception of social/interpersonal skills (on a 1st or 2nd choice basis - it becomes the second most important skill), the relative ranking of the four options remains unchanged.

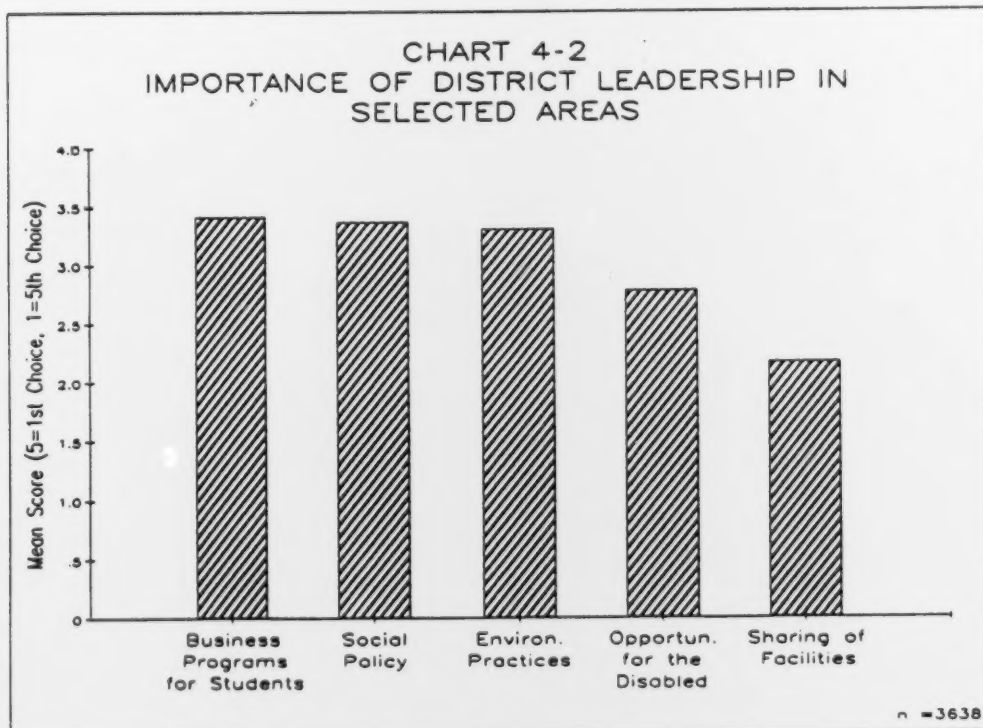
CHART 4-1
SUPPORT FOR EDUCATIONAL ORIENTATION IN SD68
1st CHOICE & 1st OR 2nd CHOICE BASIS
ALL RESPONDENTS



4.2 Importance of District Leadership In Social & Community Areas

Secondary students, parents, and staff were asked to comment on the importance of the District's providing leadership in establishing the following:

1. *social policies (student hunger, child abuse, etc.) in the community*
 2. *a role model for environmentally-responsible practices*
 3. *greater sharing of public facilities*
 4. *career/work experience programs with businesses for students*
 5. *more opportunities for those with disabilities and special needs*
- As highlighted in Chart 4-2, on a mean score basis - 5 representing the first choice and 1 representing a respondent's fifth choice - respondents placed greater emphasis on the District's leadership in providing career/work experience programs with business employers for students (mean score of 3.42) followed by SD68 establishing appropriate social policies (3.37) or environmental practices (3.31). Respondents attached lesser importance to the District's efforts to enhance sharing of public facilities (2.17) and the District's providing more opportunities for the disabled and individuals with special needs (2.78).



- Respondent opinion was not uniform across all target groups. For example, as highlighted in Table 4-2, there were considerable differences in the emphasis placed on each of the five identified options. Parents felt that it was most important for the District to provide leadership in establishing career/work experience programs with business employers for students; secondary students assigned a greater importance to the District's providing leadership on social issues such as student hunger, multiculturalism and child abuse. SD68 staff held varying opinions as to the relative importance of the identified social, environmental and vocational options.

Table 4-2
Relative Ranking of District Leadership Option
by Target Group

Option/Group	S/Sec'd	P/Elem	P/Sec'd	Inst.	A.O.'s	Other	Parents	Staff	SD68
Career/Work exp. pgms	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	3	1
Social Policies	1	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2
Environ. Policies	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	1	3
Disabled/Special Needs	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Facilities Sharing	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Avg. % No Opinion	12.0%	4.6%	33%	6.2%	6.3%	5.9%	4.1%	6.2%	8.0%

- As highlighted in Table 4-2, while parents listed the career/work experience partnerships as the most important option that the District should pursue, SD68 staff assigned this policy option a lower ranking.
- 92.0% of all respondents ranked District leadership options. A notable proportion, however, of secondary students (12.0%) and SD68 instructional staff (6.2%) did not provide an opinion as to the relative importance of the listed options.

4.3 Opinion About Proposed Funding Allocations

Parents and staff respondents were asked to provide an opinion as to how the District should allocate additional funds if taxes were to be increased. Survey results indicate:

- Of the 2,049 parent and staff participants who responded, 59.5% indicated that additional funding should be allocated first to decrease class sizes in SD68. Support for smaller classes ranged from 76% among SD68 instructional staff to 47.1% among secondary parents and 43.6% among District support/non-instructional staff.
- On a first choice basis, approximately 15% of respondents indicated that additional funding should be targetted for the upgrading and/or establishment of new educational programs (17.3% of respondents stated that this should be the first priority for new funding), or for the upgrading of school facilities including buildings, labs and gymnasiums (15.1%). 7.1 percent of respondents suggested that additional funding should be allocated for the purchase/upgrading of new equipment (sports/lab equipment, computers, musical instruments, etc.).

Table 4-3
Support for Funding Allocation - Selected Areas

Group/Issue - % Mean Score	% 1st Choice	% 1st/2nd Choice	Mean ¹
Parents:			
Smaller classes	52.8%	73.1%	3.11
Upgrade/Establish new educ. prgms.	23.3%	54.3%	2.56
Better school facilities	14.9%	38.2%	2.23
New/Upgraded equip (comp, supplies, etc.)	8.9%	33.9%	2.13
Staff:			
Smaller classes	65.2%	77.5%	3.24
Upgrade/Establish new educ. prgms.	12.2%	34.4%	2.30
Better school facilities	15.3%	52.4%	2.38
New/Upgraded equip (comp, supplies, etc.)	5.5%	31.8%	2.10

n = 2,049

¹4 = 1st Choice, 1 = 4th Choice

- It should be noted that the identified funding allocations might not be representative of the community as a whole, as these questions were not administered to the public and business community respondents.

4.4 Operating Considerations in SD68

Parents and staff respondents were to comment on the appropriateness of various operational models to enhance the efficiency of education delivery in SD68. These "models" included:

1. *Extending the number of school hours in a day*
 2. *Lengthening the school year*
 3. *Establishing a four quarter semester system*
 4. *Providing more home-schooling/out-of-school programs*
- As highlighted in Table 4-4, there were significant differences in opinion with respect to the various operational options being considered by the Nanaimo School District. For example, whereas 20.9% of parents indicated, on a first choice basis, that the District should lengthen the school year, only 8.6% of staff (4.9% of teachers) cited a longer school year as their first choice in promoting flexibility in SD68.

Table 4-4
Support for Options to Increase Flexibility in SD68
Proportion Cited on a First Choice Basis
by Target Group

Suggested alternative:

Group/Alternative	Longer School Day	Longer School Year	Quarterly Semester	Home-Schooling
Elementary parents	31.5%	21.5%	20.2%	18.1%
Secondary parents	25.6%	20.0%	34.4%	14.8%
Parent Average	29.3%	20.9%	25.5%	16.9%
Instructional staff	21.1%	4.9%	43.3%	19.8%
A.O.'s	17.2%	6.9%	58.3%	31.8%
Support/Other	28.1%	16.2%	29.5%	13.9%
Staff Average	23.0%	8.6%	40.2%	17.0%
SD68 Average	26.0%	14.5%	33.2%	17.0%

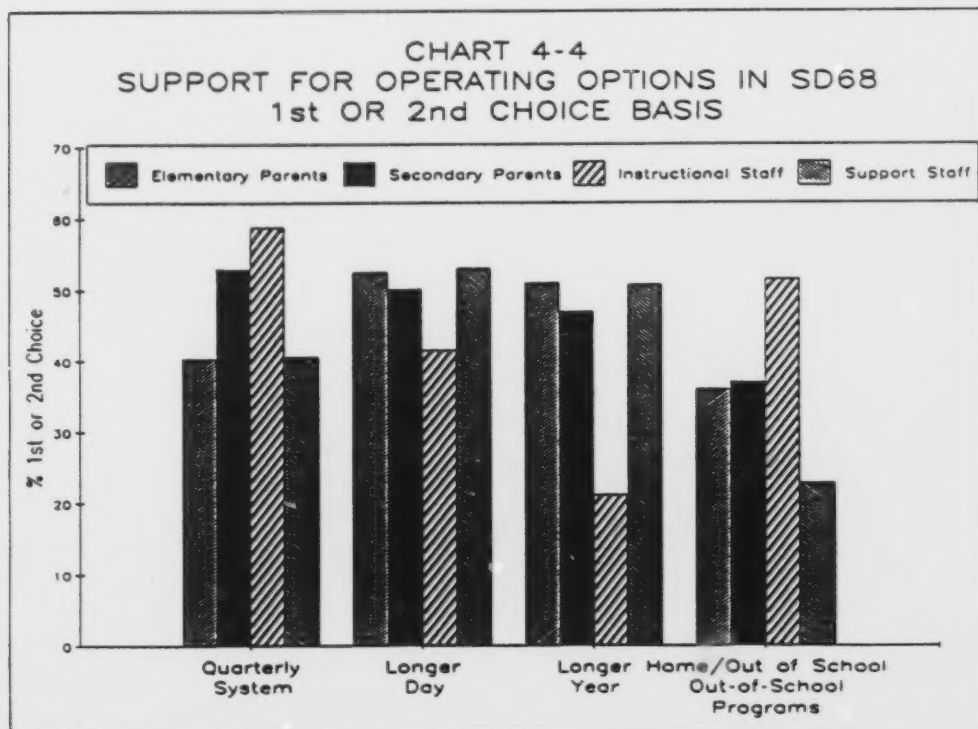
n = 1,061

Note: Totals may not add to 100 due to missing data and/or multiple response

- No single alternative received overwhelming support. Although more than 40% of SD68 staff were in favour of establishing a year-round quarterly semester system, only 25.5% of parents (20.2% of elementary parents) noted this option as their first choice. Alternatives receiving less support included home-schooling (17.0%) and the provision for a longer school year (14.5%).

Highlighted in Chart 4-4 are operating preferences by target group on a 1st or 2nd choice basis. Based on a review of responses provided, some general conclusions can be made.

- Most of SD68 instructional staff were not in favour of increasing the length of the school year. Only one-fifth (21.1%) of teachers surveyed indicated that this would be their primary (4.9%) or secondary (16.2%) option.
- Although a significant proportion of teachers (51.6%) indicated that greater utilization of home-schooling or out-of-school programs would be their preferred (19.8%) or secondary (31.8%) option, only 36.0% and 37.1% of elementary and secondary parents respectively selected this option as either their first or second choice. In contrast to teacher preferences for alternatives other than longer school days and/or school year, more than one-half of all parents surveyed cited longer school days or a longer school year as their preferred options.



B. TARGET GROUP ANALYSIS

B. TARGET GROUP ANALYSIS

SECTION V: SURVEY OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY STUDENTS

Objective

While the development of the survey instrument allowed for some cross-group comparison, some of the surveys contained questions that were not appropriate in other surveys. Because much of the specific information obtained from the individual surveys has been presented in the four background reports prepared for this study, the focus of this section will be on two major areas:

1. Identification of target group strengths and weaknesses
2. Presentation of respondent comments

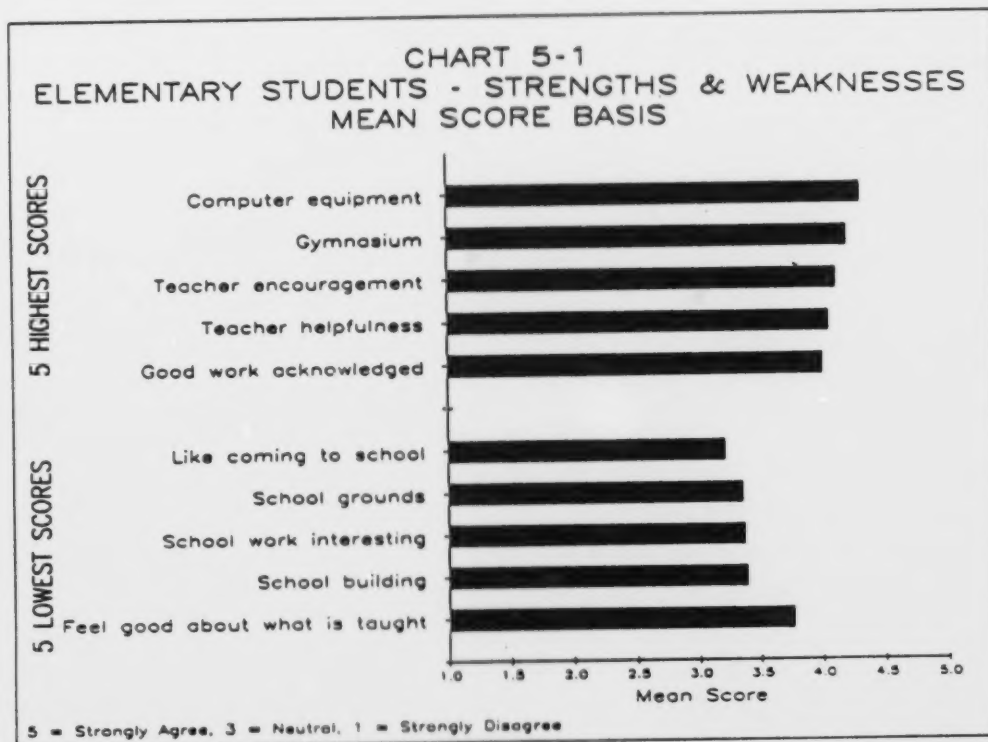
As the majority of the questions in the *Decisions for a Decade Survey* were closed-ended, respondents were given the opportunity at the end of the survey to provide additional comments. Of the 4,765 surveys returned, 2,129 (44.7%) included additional comments.

The comments entailed considerable review and analysis. On occasion, the respondent would address a range of issues. Also, although a respondent might have identified several areas requiring improvements, he or she would note areas in which District performance was satisfactory or excellent.

Upon a review of comments, they were classified as being "positive," "negative" or "neutral." It must be emphasized that given the relatively subjective interpretation of these comments by the project researchers, categorization of these comments represents a general approximation of respondent observations, and, as such, might be an attempt at constructive criticism rather than an expression of dissatisfaction with the School District. In addition, as respondents generally use the comments section to state grievances, the distribution of comments cannot be interpreted to represent the opinions of the sample as a whole, as satisfied respondents would be less likely to include additional comments or observations.

5.1 Elementary Students - School Strengths & Weaknesses

To provide an overall perspective of what elementary students considered to be the strengths and weaknesses of their school and the education system, a mean score analysis was undertaken for the 14 questions asked. As highlighted in Chart 5-1, elementary students assigned high marks to school computer equipment (mean score of 4.31), the school gym (4.20), and to teacher encouragement (4.11). Lower scores were given by students to areas such as liking to come to school (3.21) and school grounds (3.35).



5.2 Elementary Student Comments

Highlighted in Table 5-2 are comments provided by SD68 elementary students.

- Of a total of 451 comments, 78.7% were classified as negative (or dissatisfied), 20.1% were positive (or satisfied) and 1.2% were classified as neutral.
- On average, each student who provided a comment addressed 1.4 issues.

Table 5-2
Classification of Elementary Student Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Gym/equipment/playground	0.9%	23.5%	24.4%
Teacher(s)/school	9.3%	3.3%	12.6%
Sport/recreational activities	1.1%	8.9%	10.0%
Computers	-	8.6%	8.6%
Library/library books	0.2%	4.4%	4.6%
Other courses (art, drama)	0.2%	3.5%	3.7%
Janitor/school cleanliness	0.2%	2.9%	3.1%
Clubs	0.2%	1.6%	1.8%
School activities (dances/concerts)	0.9%	0.9%	1.8%
Transportation/buses	-	0.7%	0.7%
Basics (reading/writing/math)	0.4%	-	0.4%
Other positive/negative	4.3%	20.2%	24.5%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	2.4%	0.2%	2.6%
Total positive/negative	17.7%	78.5%	96.2%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	3.4%
Average # of comments/respondents	-	-	1.4

n = 333

5.3 Views of Secondary Students - Selected Areas

In addition to questions about school safety, student-teacher relationships and satisfaction with the school, secondary students were asked several questions pertaining to extra-curricular activities, satisfaction with counselling and career planning information, as well as questions about student self-esteem and parental involvement.

- As highlighted in Table 5-3, the majority (57.7%) of secondary students agreed or strongly agreed that good extra-curricular programs were available in their school.
- Less than one-half (37.2%) of secondary students surveyed indicated that they had a good knowledge of scholarships and awards available to them after graduation. Among Grade 12 students, only a slightly higher (43.6%) proportion had a good knowledge of the availability of such awards.
- More than 85% of secondary students indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that their parents cared about how well they fared in school.

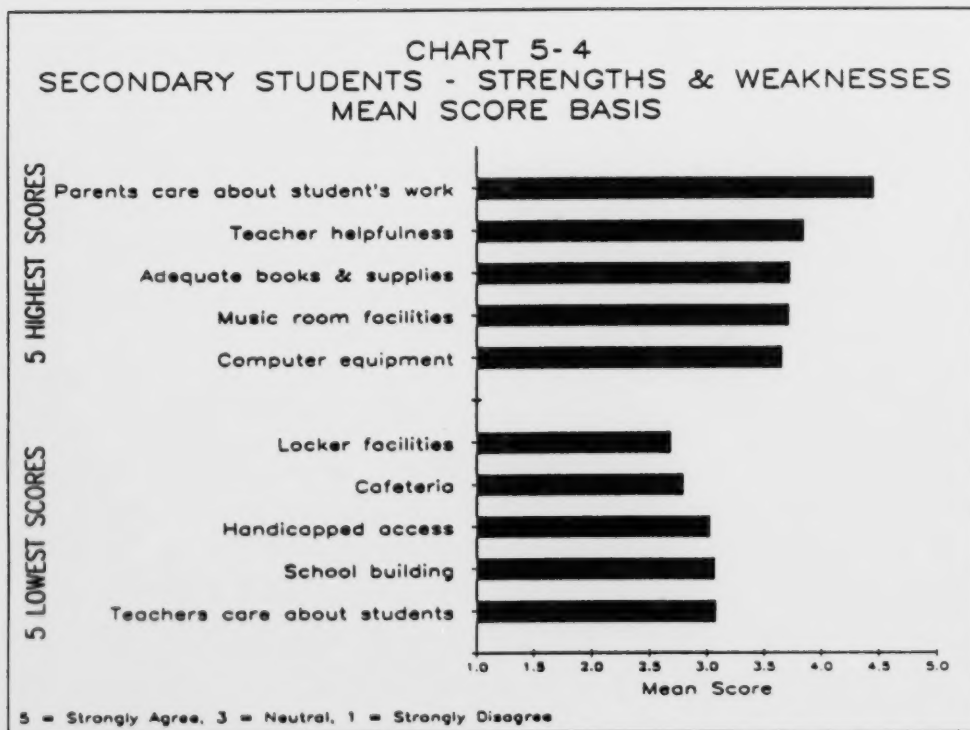
Table 5-3
Views of Secondary Students
Selected Areas

Area/View	% Agree/ Strongly Agree	% Neutral	% Disagree/ Strongly Dis- agree	% Don't Know	Mean Score
Good extra-curric. pro- grams available	57.7%	21.3%	16.8%	4.1%	3.56
Satisfied with career planning	40.5%	21.0%	12.6%	25.8%	3.47
Satisfied with personal counselling	44.4%	20.9%	12.9%	21.8%	3.52
Aware of scholarships/ awards	37.2%	20.5%	30.5%	11.8%	3.08
Have adequate books/supplies	67.5%	22.3%	8.4%	1.8%	3.92
Parents care about my school work	87.5%	6.9%	4.2%	1.5%	4.86

n = 1,269

5.4 Secondary Students - Strengths & Weaknesses

For the secondary students, a mean score analysis was completed of the school's strengths and weaknesses on the basis of the average score for each question. Because the proportion of no opinion was higher for some of the questions among secondary students (many of the students indicated don't know or no opinion for questions pertaining to counselling/career preparation), the use of a mean score analysis should be interpreted with caution.



5.5 Secondary Student Comments

- Of the 697 comments made, 6.6% were classified as positive, 91.5% were classified as negative and 1.9% were classified as neutral.
- 598, or 47.9%, of secondary students provided additional comments. On average, each secondary student who provided a comment addressed 1.2 issues.

Table 5-5
Classification of Secondary Student Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Teachers/school	2.6%	17.2%	19.8%
Class size/school facilities/lockers/equipment	-	10.8%	10.8%
Cafeteria/cost of food	-	7.0%	7.0%
Gym size/gym equipment	-	6.2%	6.2%
School spirit/dances/concerts/etc.	-	5.2%	5.2%
Transportation/busing issues	-	4.4%	4.4%
Want smoking privileges at school	-	3.6%	3.6%
Want condom machines/dispensers	-	3.3%	3.3%
Sports/recreational activities	-	3.2%	3.2%
Other positive/negative	1.8%	29.7%	31.5%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	2.2%	0.9%	3.1%
Total positive/negative	6.6%	91.5%	98.1%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	1.9%
Average # of comments/respondents	-	-	1.2

n = 598

SECTION VI: SURVEY OF PARENTS & THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Objective

Parents who had children in an elementary and/or a secondary school in SD68 were surveyed to ascertain their opinions about several issues pertaining to their child's school and the School District. A total of 985 parents were surveyed: 624 (63.4%) were parents with children in an elementary school and 361 (36.6%) were parents whose children attend a secondary school.

In addition to information obtained from the surveys forwarded to parents, information provided by 156 business or professional respondents, and the 335 public participants contacted by telephone to participate in the *Decisions for a Decade Survey*, is presented.

6.1 School/District Strengths & Weaknesses - Elementary & Secondary Parents

As with the survey of elementary and secondary students, analysis was undertaken to ascertain in which areas parents felt that the school/District was doing well and in which areas school/District performance was below average. As highlighted in Table 6-1, parents of elementary and secondary students share many opinions regarding school/District strengths and weaknesses. Both parent groups cited the welcoming school atmosphere and ability to contact teachers as two of the most positive attributes of their child's respective school; and, both parent groups were less supportive of the District's bus service and the general quality of education provided in B.C.

Table 6-1
School/District Strengths & Weaknesses
by Parent Group - Mean Score Basis

Score/Group	Elementary Parents	Secondary Parents
Highest	Can contact teacher easily (4.38)	School welcome (4.01)
2nd Highest	School welcome (4.35)	Can contact teacher easily (3.99)
3rd Highest	Environmental programs (4.07)	Child safe at school (3.77)
4th Highest	Child safe at school (4.04)	Environmental programs (3.68)
5th Highest	Teachers' instruction quality (4.00)	Bus service-buses (3.65)
Lowest	Bus service-buses (2.48)	Bus service-schedules (2.59)
2nd Lowest	Bus service-schedules (3.00)	Teacher-learning needs of child (2.77)
3rd Lowest	Quality of education-B.C. (3.15)	Vocational skills (2.81)
4th Lowest	Handicapped access (3.18)	Quality of education-B.C. (3.08)
5th Lowest	Quality of education-SD68 (3.26)	Counselling-career opp. (3.13)

- It should be noted that although bus service is a major issue among both elementary and secondary parents, only 37.5% of elementary parents and 50.1% of secondary parents had an opinion about the bus service in SD68.

6.2 Elementary Parents - Comments

- Comments were provided by 314 elementary parents: 60.4% of all parents surveyed.
- Of the 429 comments made, 25.6% were classified as positive, 66.0% as negative and 8.4% as neutral. On average, each parent addressed 1.4 issues.

Table 6-2
Classification of Elementary Parent Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Teachers/school issues	10.5%	1.9%	12.4%
More teachers needed/not enough teachers	-	10.3%	10.3%
Need smaller classes/improved facilities	0.2%	8.9%	9.1%
Dual Entry program	1.6%	7.0%	8.6%
Better attention to basics	-	6.3%	6.3%
Administration/School Board	0.9%	3.7%	4.6%
French Immersion/French programs	1.2%	2.3%	3.5%
Need more funding	-	2.8%	2.8%
Year 2000 program	0.9%	1.2%	2.1%
Funding adequate	1.4%	-	1.4%
Too many teachers	-	0.2%	0.2%
Other positive/negative	5.9%	20.7%	26.6%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	3.0%	0.7%	3.7%
Total positive/negative	25.6%	66.0%	91.6%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	8.4%
Average # of comments/respondents			1.4

n = 314

6.3 Secondary Parents - Comments

- 200 or 63.7% of SD68 parents with a child(ren) in an SD68 secondary school provided additional comments about education in Nanaimo.
- On average, each secondary parent raised 1.6 issues. Of these comments, the majority (76.5%) were critical of the school/District, 18.0% were positive or supportive of the District and 5.5% were neutral.

Table 6-3
Classification of Secondary Parent Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Teachers/school issues	8.0%	6.5%	14.5%
School facilities/class size/equipment	0.3%	9.3%	9.6%
Attention to basics	-	8.7%	8.7%
Students	0.3%	5.9%	6.2%
Semester system	-	4.6%	4.6%
Need more funding for education	-	4.6%	4.6%
Information about school/student progress	-	3.4%	3.4%
Lifestyle programs	-	2.2%	2.2%
Funding adequate	1.9%	-	1.9%
Year 2000 program	0.6%	0.6%	1.2%
Other positive/negative	3.5%	29.2%	32.7%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	3.4%	1.5%	4.9%
Total positive/negative	18.0%	76.5%	94.5%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	5.5%
Average # of comments/respondents	-	-	1.6

n = 200

6.4 Community - Comments

- 196 of the 335 (58.5%) of public respondents provided additional comments about education in SD68. Of the 327 comments provided by community participants, 18.0% were classified as positive, 75.5% as negative, and 6.5% were deemed to be neutral.
- On average, each public respondent addressed 1.7 issues.

Table 6-4
Classification of Community Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Lifestyle program(s)	2.1%	11.0%	13.1%
Quality of teachers	6.7%	7.0%	13.7%
Attention to the basics	0.6%	7.6%	8.2%
Subjects taught/programs offered	1.8%	6.1%	7.9%
Class size/school facilities	-	7.0%	7.0%
Student discipline (parents incompetent)	-	4.0%	4.0%
Student safety	-	4.0%	4.0%
Day-care/Student-care	0.6%	2.8%	3.4%
French Immersion	0.9%	2.1%	3.0%
Discipline (teachers incompetent)	-	2.1%	2.1%
Other positive/negative	3.2%	21.5%	24.7%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	2.1%	0.3%	2.4%
Total positive/negative	18.0%	75.5%	93.5%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	5.5%
Average # of comments/respondents	-	-	1.7

n = 196

6.5 Business Community - Comments

- 81 of the 154 (52.6%) business/professional respondents provided additional comments about education in SD68.
- Of the 87 comments provided (1.1 issues/respondent), the majority (72.4%) were critical of the District. 17.2% of the comments received were coded as positive and 10.3% as neutral.

Table 6-5
Classification of Business Community Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Attention to the basics	-	13.8%	13.8%
Student attitudes	4.6%	8.0%	12.6%
Student work experience	-	8.0%	8.0%
Teacher competence	4.6%	3.4%	8.0%
Parental guidance for children	1.1%	6.9%	8.0%
Apprenticeship/trade school training	1.1%	6.9%	8.0%
Other positive/negative	1.2%	25.4%	26.6%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	4.6%	-	4.6%
Total positive/negative	17.2%	72.4%	89.6%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	10.3%
Average # of comments/respondents	-	-	1.1

n = 81

SECTION VII: VIEWS OF RECENT GRADUATES FROM SD68

Objective

A telephone survey was administered to recent graduates. Recent graduates were requested to comment on how well the School District had prepared them for paid employment or advanced education, whether counselling had been provided to assist them in their career decisions, and what courses they felt they should have completed while in Grade 12. A total of 134 graduates were contacted of which an almost equal proportion graduated from each of the senior high schools in SD68.

7.1 Current Status of Recent Graduates of SD68

Of the 134 graduates surveyed, approximately 54.5% were part or full-time students of a university, college, trade or technical school; 39.6% were working and 5.9% were unemployed. As only recent graduates in the Nanaimo/Southern Vancouver Island region were contacted, the sample obtained might not be an accurate representation of their current status, particularly as some of the unemployed recent graduates could reside in other centers. Also, many recent graduates who were enrolled in local college courses, or who had found full-time employment, were likely to have remained in the Nanaimo area.

Table 7-1
Current Status of SD68 Graduates

Current Status	Percent
Attending University (UBC, SFU, UVic)	3.0%
Attending Malaspina College	44.8%
Attending other colleges (BCIT, Camosun, etc)	6.7%
Post-Secondary Total	54.5%
Employed - less than 30 hrs/week	9.7%
Employed - full-time	29.9%
Employed Total	39.6%
Unemployed	5.9%
Total	100.0%

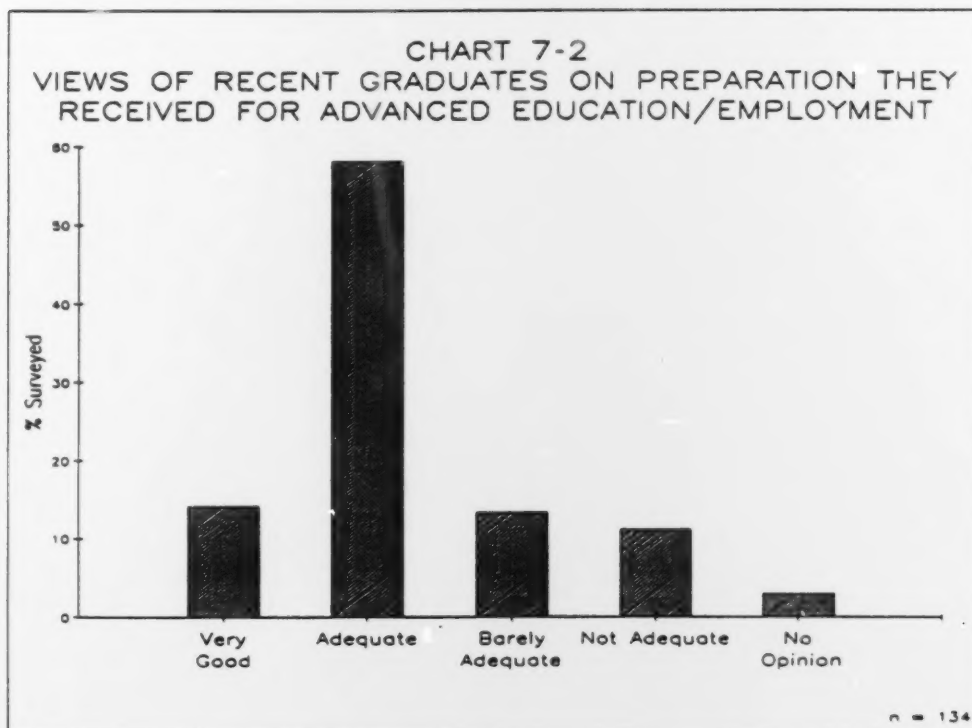
n = 134

- Of the 53 graduates who were working, 32.1% indicated that they were working in a job they had prepared for while in school. The majority (67.9%) indicated that the training that they received in high school was not directly applicable to their current job.

7.2 Views of Recent Graduates on Preparation for Paid Employment/Advanced Education

The majority of recent graduates (72.4%) felt that the education they had received while attending school in SD68 was very good (14.2%) or adequate (58.2%) in having provided them with the necessary skills for advanced education or paid employment. 24.6% of recent graduates, however, stated that the education provided was barely adequate (13.4%) or not at all adequate (11.2%), and 3.0% of recent graduates had no opinion.

Of the 33 respondents (24.6%) who indicated that the education they received was barely adequate or not at all adequate, 30.3% stated that they did not receive sufficient technical training. Other reasons for dissatisfaction with the education provided by SD68 included insufficient attention to the "basics" (15.2%), not enough general life skills education (15.2%), and other reasons (39.4%). The opinions of recent graduates did not vary on the basis of gender or present status (in university, trade or technical school, or employment).



7.3 SD68 Graduates - Comments

- At the conclusion of the telephone survey, respondents were invited to provide additional comments about their educational experience in SD68. Of the 134 graduates contacted, 57 (42.5%) volunteered additional information.
- Upon review of the comments provided, 23.9% were classified as positive and 76.1% as negative. Each respondent, on average, addressed 1.9 issues.

Table 7-3
Classification of Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Facilities (space/equipment/desks/etc.)	-	25.7%	25.7%
Quality of teachers	7.3%	6.4%	13.7%
School library	-	9.2%	9.2%
Needed more courses/options	-	7.3%	7.3%
Computers/computer courses	-	6.4%	6.4%
Counsellors	1.8%	4.6%	6.4%
Other positive/negative	14.8%	16.5%	31.3%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	-	-	-
Total positive/negative	23.9%	76.1%	100.0%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	0.0%
Average # of comments/respondents	-	-	1.9

n = 57

SECTION VIII: STAFF CONCERNS & OPINIONS IN SD68

Objective

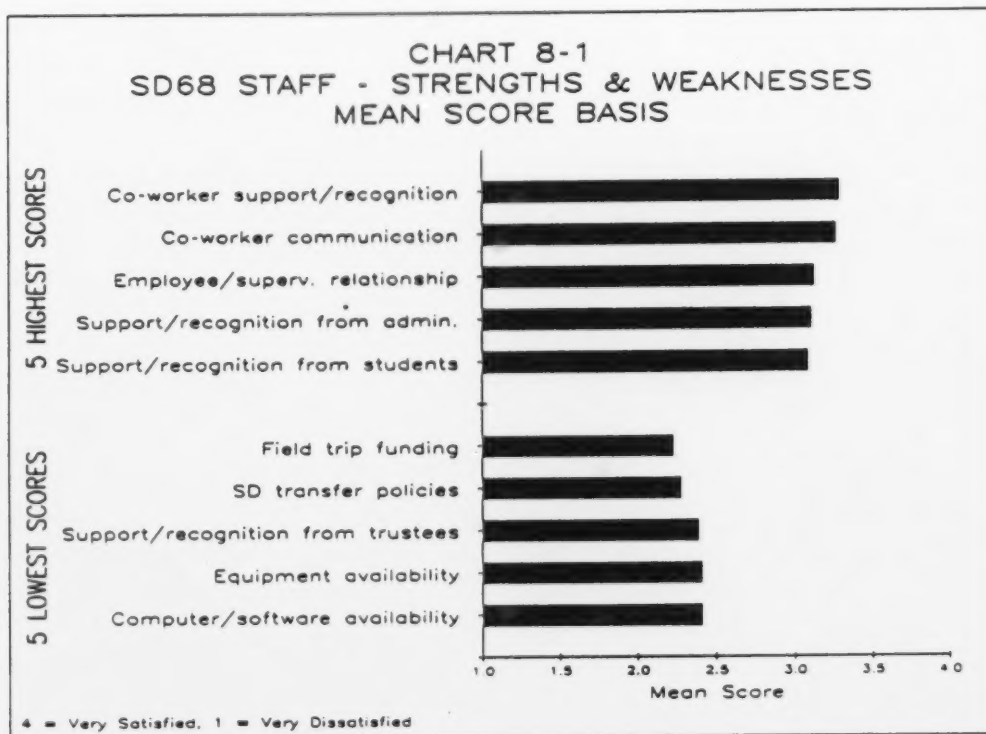
Included in the surveys of SD68 staff members were questions designed to measure employee satisfaction in areas such as: goal setting, issues related to working conditions, professional development and satisfaction with the recognition and appreciation received from various community/supervisory groups. This section contains the strengths and weaknesses identified by SD68 staff as well as an overview of the comments provided by staff respondents.

Detailed information pertaining to staff issues in SD68 has been provided in Volume 1 of the background reports: *Personnel Issues*.

8.1 SD68 Strengths & Weaknesses - SD68 Staff

As with the analysis completed for students and parents, responses furnished by SD68 staff were scored to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the District as perceived by SD68 employees. As highlighted in Chart 8-1, SD68 staff felt the most positive about the support and recognition provided by their co-workers (mean score of 3.29), co-worker communication (3.27) and their relationship with their supervisor (3.13). SD68 employees were most dissatisfied with funding allocated for field trips (2.23), District transfer policies (2.28) and support and recognition provided by trustees (2.39).

It should be noted that the mean score for SD68 staff is on a slightly different scale: 4 represents very satisfied and 1 represents very dissatisfied.



8.2 SD68 Staff - Comments

- Staff respondents were asked to provide additional comments in two areas: (1) how the District could enhance staff satisfaction with their job, and (2) comments about the District in general. As an analysis of suggested improvements is detailed in the *Personnel Issues* background report, only the general comments are addressed below.
- 352 of the 1,064 (33.1%) SD68 employees provided additional comments at the end of the survey. Classification of these comments resulted in positive codes assigned to 18.1% of the comments, negative codes to 72.3% and neutral codes to 9.6% of the issues raised.
- The 352 employees provided 626 comments, an average of 1.8 issues per employee.

Table 8-2
Classification of SD68 Staff Comments
% of All Comments

Comment about:	Positive	Negative	Total
Workload/preparation time	0.3%	10.1%	10.4%
Class size/school facilities/equipment	0.5%	9.7%	10.2%
Satisfaction with School Board/District	3.7%	6.1%	9.8%
Acceptance of school year alternatives	0.2%	8.9%	9.1%
Satisfaction with admin officers	0.6%	6.2%	6.8%
Instructional/support staff	2.9%	3.6%	6.5%
Hiring/promotion/transfer policies	0.3%	4.0%	4.3%
Require more funding	-	4.2%	4.2%
Year 2000 program	2.2%	0.3%	2.5%
Funding adequate	0.8%	-	0.8%
Other positive/negative	3.3%	16.8%	20.1%
Questions raised about school/survey etc.	3.3%	2.4%	5.7%
Total positive/negative	18.1%	72.3%	90.4%
"Neutral" comments	N/A	N/A	9.6%
Average # of comments/respondents	-	-	1.8

n = 352



DECISIONS FOR A DECADE

TASK FORCE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX B

NOTES: PUBLIC MEETINGS

**School District 68 (Nanaimo)
June 1991**

ZONE MEETING

January 17/91. Barsby. Zone 4.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough; Doug Summers; George Duffell; Dave Williamson; Betty Shaw; Tony Dobson; Robyn Clements; Marg Smith; Jennifer McNeil

TRUSTEE: Diane Brennan

HOSTS: Caroline Isles. SLC member
Bruce Mitchell, Barsby Principal

ATTENDANCE: 10

TOTAL: 22

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- more group and individual projects
- less texts
- more intense studies of subjects (broken down)
- shorter subjects (time)
- smaller classes
- different languages
- more creative thinking learning
- independent thinking
- more hands on
- open learning atmosphere (student & teacher both learning)
- volunteer component - community work (locally developed)
- more emphasis on process (learning how to learn)
- emphasis on teaching of ethics
- more education for educators (Personnel)
(training for change)
- give student opportunity to choose own route in learning
- more truth in history
- concentrate on recent history, present and future
- integrated curriculum
- more teaching of black and women's history (broader base)
- break down history in past, present and future
- extend Primary Program to upper levels
- education and work experience combined to give financial support (alternate semesters)
- use refugees as resources
- provide childcare - for students and others working in the system
- parenting programs
- gifted programs
- adjusted programs

Personnel:

- regular evaluation of teachers (increased?)
- inservice for students to interact positively with teachers
 - forum for evaluation/open dialogue by students
- A.O. asks students how they feel about situations and teachers
- better support for teachers
- recruitment of teachers important
- public relations should be more positive for recruitment
- internship program for new teachers
- marketing for the district
- teachers should be role models for students therefore encouraging them to enter teaching
- teacher/student mentor clubs (value teaching as a profession)
- individual schools to develop support group (all staff)
- mandatory school based staff development (entire staff eg. clerical, janitorial)
- more personal contact when accessing schools (no answering machines)
- open staff meetings to parents
- better recognition of diversity of students' needs (more help, training and appreciation)
- smaller class sizes
- extra-curricular involvement should be recognized (teachers should receive benefits for this)
- A.O. hired by the community

Materials:

- equitable distribution of equipment & materials (eg. computers, sports)
- materials to go to schools where it is needed, not by number of students (higher distribution to higher needs students/schools)
- multi-purpose rooms
- flexible room arrangements
- better locker room facilities (change rooms/showers)
- personnel more important than rooms (spend money on good teachers eg. good teachers can teach in dumps)
- more decentralized budget - decisions should be by funding allocation
- parent fund-raising should go into a district pool
- incentive for students to do fund-raising for their school
- ceiling figure in fund-raising --excess goes into district pool
- zone and feeder school fund-raise together
- parents with experience help others with fund-raising
- distribution of funds by student participation
- dorms for visitors (hostel close to school, community funded and staffed)

- wheelchair access (all handicap facilities)
- modular additions to schools
- student social areas in each school
- colour into schools (inside and out)
- student/teacher lounge
- every high school should have assembly area that accommodates all students (eg. auditorium)
- eating areas large enough to accommodate all students
- covered/protected areas for each school
- developers pay for new schools -

Community:

- schools should be a facility for daycare and latch-key children (should involve older students)
- parent involvement in school through to high school
- school involvement in community should continue throughout high school
- advanced system of volunteers
- high school parents could help out in areas other than where their children are
- community school concept expanded
- get parents involved in what they're good at (eg. washing baby in babysitting class)
- make the physical facilities more available to elderly
- more involvement with the elderly (eg. WW2 veteran)
- schools open for after-hour activities (eg. seniors clubs)
- free school daycare facilities could be used for community meetings etc.
- incentives/recognition for all students and teachers to do community work (give & take cycle)
- student volunteer community work encouraged by teachers
- more pressure for teachers to be involved in the community in which they teach
- meaningful involvement for parents
- mandate public health nurses into schools
- personnel to do community liason (eg. CCW's)
- community developed educational programs (college & SD 68 together)

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

January 17/91

Zone 4

"For Programs: I feel more emphasis should be put on teaching life skills. More than just how to balance a cheque book. Young people need to be better prepared for a life after school and they should be taught what communities expect from a person."

Hearing? no

"Material Resources Committee Funding: Have you looked into a greater % of funds going into high needs schools?"

"Make open door learning accessible for illiterate people - lots of single parents/dropouts still do not know general reading skills."

Hearing? no

"Curriculum and Programs: Peace education mandatory prescribed part of curriculum."

Hearing? no

"Programs: Smaller class sizes in primary and no more than a 1:12 ratio through grade 4 in high needs schools."

"Personnel: Head or lead teacher in each school - non-evaluation - a "teaching the teacher" role/support."

ZONE MEETING

January 21, 1991. Ladysmith Primary, Zone 1.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough, Doug Sommers, Dave Williamson, Betty Shaw, Tony Dobson, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith

TRUSTEE: Don Brown

HOSTS: Joan May, S.L.C.
Al Cormons, Principal

ATTENDANCE: 11

TOTAL: 21

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- learning "outside" lessons - listening skills
- cultural exchanges
- special education - good reputation - maintain and increase material and personnel support
- maintain teaching of phonics in whole language
- Year 2000 - more information on direct impact especially in high schools
- limit programs in order to improve what is currently offered
- mentor system in high schools - students could work with "experts" in selected areas
- more counselling available in high schools to help students select requirements for university
- students to receive their necessary educational requirements within their community (ie not necessary to transport to other schools)
- developing better work habits
- good things happening in cooperative learning, buddying - fun - open, intense learning, exciting teachers!!
- must attract interesting, exciting teachers
- creative and critical thinking skills must be stressed - lifetime skill
- non-graded still means evaluation
- teachers should be trained in computers so computers are better utilized - computer resource person for more complete use of computers in programs
- more emphasis on parental cooperation - schools should be more inviting - parents and teachers should be a team - co-educators of children
- mills should sponsor work experience - expansion of work experience - hands on out in community
- more career days
- more student exchanges

PERSONNEL:

- enthusiasm (attitude)
- adjust class sizes to account for special mixes ie cultural, language
- one teacher only per class
- improve support delivery time
- rotate teachers to gain fresh ideas
- more frequent teacher evaluation
- greater ratio of staff to students for supervision
- higher salaries
- providing positive classroom environment
- students should be well supplied eg. art supplies
- seek innovative ways to maintain staff and to recruit for the future
- recruit teachers from diverse backgrounds
- more learning assistance teachers
- smaller classes - limit to a specific size
- should be follow through and ongoing support and training for teachers eg. in mainstreaming
- team teaching in classrooms
- have parents on teacher recruitment teams
- more teacher exchanges with other countries
- more time allotted for inservice for all teachers during school day
- retraining of teachers for new programs
- hiring after school staff for extra-curricular activities
- ensure classrooms properly cleaned
- district emphasis on teachers as professionals rather than union status
- local training for new teachers - internships
- recruit from other fields and professions

MATERIALS:

- larger classrooms
- classrooms that can be modified easily for other uses
- well equipped athletics
- smaller schools should have equal facilities
- all schools should have a parent/social meeting room
- multi-purpose rooms for smaller group work - for pods of three to four rooms
- "secure" areas for special purposes
- kitchen for "hot" meal purposes
- taped material - textual
- more storage areas
- improved playground equipment
- decent staffrooms
- every teacher should have a computer
- more money for general supplies

- improved maintenance and yard work ie snow removal
- bus - safe loading zones
- permanent classrooms only - no portables
- buses for fieldtrips - not cars
- improved site planning for new schools
- theatres in all schools with a good stage
- separate cloakrooms
- teacher participation in school planning
- flat-topped desks that are easily grouped
- more evening and weekend use of schools - social centres for children - summers also
- future designs should be multi-use - not just school but community centre also
- upgrade libraries to learning resource centres - multi-media collections - access beyond school
- library staff should be technology literate
- standardized student supplies which district buys not parents - for uniformity
- garden in every school
- better sheltered areas
- more computers and lab time - computers in classrooms as well as labs
- sink and water in every primary classroom
- school video cameras
- general upkeep of schools should be maintained eg. painting
- allocation of funds based on need rather than number of students
- more natural light in classrooms
- single story schools

COMMUNITY:

- seniors into schools and students into seniors' environment
- more joint use of facilities eg. municipalities and schools
- encourage positive image by making schools accessible to community members
- high schools made available to adults (awareness)
- volunteer program separate from direct educational service delivery - confidentiality issues
- district should promote services available
- joint maintenance agreements - properties/staffs/ equipment (between S.D. #68 and municipality)
- use community talent to supplement Year 2000 programs
- teachers to teach basics and not become coordinators for others eg. community
- should be limits and parameters on what schools do
- more partnerships with business - work experience
- schools should try to reach community outside of those who are parents

- short courses put on by district for parents who want to do volunteer work in schools
- schools should sponsor community activities such as plays and blood donor clinics
- non-parent taxpayers must understand what is happening in schools
- offer more night courses for adults - within the community, not just at Malaspina
- have bus to transport adults to night classes at Malaspina
- global education with community impact

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

January 21/91

Zone 1

Programs: "More creative time tabelling for senior students to continue in Band instead of feeling they have to drop out to meet their academic requirements."

Futher discussion? yes

"Make sure there is mandatory reading level testing each year. Plus: (1) desks, (2) library resources, (3) computers with inservice available."

ZONE MEETING

January 22, 1991. Pauline Haarer Elementary, Zone 6.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough, Jennifer McNeil, George Duffell, Doug Sommers, Len Rowantree (for Betty Shaw), Dave Williamson, Tony Dobson, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith, Donna Reimer

TRUSTEE: Ingrid Clarke (+Randy Kocher)

HOSTS: Charlotte Richardson: P.A.C.
Terry Green, Principal

ATTENDANCE: 19 (including 7 students)

TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 33

BRAINSTORMING:

PROGRAMS:

- more enrichment, vocational program encouragement
- more single track French immersion school
- expanded alternative programs to include younger ages and more for Sr. Secondary
- alternate programs based at school sites
- linear vs semester programming at High School
- more sports skills
- more emphasis on student effort than student achievement
- consider ethical issues - re: feeding the work force
- more holidays throughout the year - not just summer block
- more student input into elementary music programs
- more specialist schools ie. not all high schools teach everything
- more attention to students who are returning to schools ie. re-entry
- more options available at secondary for French immersion
- students attend schools of their choice
- flexible hours in schools
- teacher assessment as well as student assessment
- s/b variety of methods for assessing students
- more recognition of different kinds of talent and effort rather than just honour roll
- variety of career preparation options to suit aptitudes of students
- more co-ordination between College and High Schools to make use of facilities
- more shorter holidays
- more co-ordination with family systems & school re breaks (consult with family re extension of school year)

PERSONNEL:

- high school level teachers know specialty areas
- "teaching" to continue through all levels (intermediate and on)
- area counsellors at secondary level
- adequate L.A. teachers
- teachers should have greater classroom autonomy ie. less bureaucratic business
- utilize college students in practicums
- parents and students evaluating A.O.'s and teachers
- model school/university school - in conjunction with Malaspina College (mentorship program)
- schools open all year
- universities s/b more responsive to District needs
- bigger variety in sports
- teachers s/b paid comparable to other Provinces so we can keep good teachers
- more counsellors at Elementary level - for students and parents
- gym specialist teachers - itinerant if necessary
- more money for "trench" people - classroom teachers
- more skills taught in gym classes
- parent on school interview committee for hiring
 - interview committees s/b smaller
- extend school day (eg. 9-4)
- special training for substitute teachers
- teachers s/b more encouraging to students
- better screening for potential teachers - not just academic criteria, but people skills
- more time off for students - less stress - more flex time for some
- perception of teachers by public - we need to restore faith in teachers (end teacher bashing)
- paid leave for burned out teachers (espec. at Jr. Sec.)
- longer break in between semesters (in year-long system)
- remove the stress of politics from the classroom teacher

MATERIALS:

- full size gyms
- bigger washrooms
- ramps for wheelchair access (washrooms)
- recycling bins
- vandal-proof compost (garden)
- 1 additional class for space
- changerooms in all schools
- more than one L.A. room
- more computers - resources - data centres
- hand-craft/skills equipment
- apprenticeship programs
- simpler materials
- more money into staffing
- keep small school concept particularly at Primary

- central core (office, etc.) with portable spokes (classrooms going out from core)
- better eating facilities eg. cafeteria
- student common areas
- nature areas - indoor gardens
- bigger libraries
- water in portables
- "time out" or conference room
- more Intermediate level books for library
- colour photocopiers and printers
- outdoor education materials
- smaller classes
- larger schools for better utilization of funds
- share equipment with city eg. kilns - Beban Park
- more natural lighting in classrooms

COMMUNITY:

- District person to integrate community services in schools (ministries)
- better communication - city/ municipality/ school
- task force to identify problems
- access community education funds from Ministry
- more courses accessible within all SD #68
- re-entry programs (ie. computers) including subsidy (collaboration)
- multiculturalism awareness @ all levels college/ community/ schools
- school buses for all schools
- combined busing and child care
- training for parent for working (teaching) their own children
- increase work experience program
- some, strategically located community schools
- coalition between schools and justice system
- schools take part in community recycling
- get seniors more involved in schools through classroom activities and their own activities
- stronger sponsorship of apprenticeship programs through local businesses
- senior citizens help out in classrooms as many parents working
- buses to bring young adults to school centre (continuing ed)
- support for a wider range of activities out of school time - evenings, weekends, summers
- encourage more businesses to "partner" with schools
- combine school and community libraries

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

January 22/91

Zone 6

"While the presence of Trustees is important in order to demonstrate support of the process, active participation should, in my opinion, be refrained from. Active listening will help ensure the decisions to follow will reflect the community's input as opposed to the Board's - or individual Trustee's agendas."

Programs: "Don't penalize kids who do well by sending them to the library & doing a boring book report rather than attending a regular class. Send them to pursue a mutually selected task/event to report on/field trip."

"Let kids choose type of music they would like to learn in regular music class."

"Enthusiasm for school diminishes every year after grade 3 - BORING - review after each school day."

Hearing? no

ZONE MEETING

January 24/91. North Cedar. Zone 3

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough; George Duffell; Betty Shaw; Marg Smith; Tony Dobson; Robyn Clements; Jennifer O'Neil; Elizabeth Pennell; Ross White

TRUSTEE: Janet Cowling

HOSTS: Cindy Pleschel, PAC member
John Buckner, North Cedar Principal

ATTENDANCE: 10

TOTAL: 22

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- language immersion available in neighbourhood schools
- active health to promote life style (autonomic understanding & well-being to improve quality of life)
- more STEPS programs (getting along, communicating, taking care of oneself, etc)
- life-time sports, use of leisure time
- program of democracy & it's process in schools
- more detailed, multi-cultural education
- beach exploration program
- environmental studies
- entrepreneurialship - "making it"
- parents involved in schools (partnership in practice)
- models for implementation of parent programs
- consideration for time to develop programs
- expansion of work experience program
- more elementary counsellors
- expanded enrichment program
- expanding library services to accommodate change
- language exposure expanded to lower grades
- peer counselling, life skills, buddy systems, ombudsperson
- buddying with community (2 way)
- pre-schools and education combined
- student assessment to include self-assessment
- corporate funding & partnership (bring economic community into the curriculum)
- industry & business to have input into curriculum development (eg. letter/number formation)

Personnel:

- job satisfaction is important to positive school climate (attitudes "rub-off", modelling)

- children should see that all personnel are important and do valuable work (eg. janitors, bus drivers)
- recognize value of all people within system
- need evaluation systems for sense of accomplishment (eg. teachers need to see success of students)
- job shadowing
- organize Pro-D days so they are convenient to parents
- have a week of Pro-D at beginning or end of term or year rather than broken up into days throughout the year
- parents involved in hiring
- servicing students by developing staff development in their direction
- parents invited to Pro-D
- office managers for larger schools
- inform public (including students) of what happens at Pro-D workshops
- more parent supervision in computer labs at lunch and after school
- everybody gets cookies and milk at 3:00pm
- all children take a second language from kindergarten on (could use existing Fr. immersion teachers if that program closed)

Materials:

- small elementary school (3 times)
- housing of alternate programs to be more creative/visionary
- lobby to change block funding
- totally different school and/or settings (eg. malls, ethnic centres, take schools to community, for at-risk student-decentralization)
- parents involved in school development and design from the beginning
- mobile school for shifting population (not portables, rather modular)
- safe playgrounds and drop-off zones for students
- playgrounds that abut community parks
- better parking
- good interior and exterior lighting
- earthquake safety regulations & emergency centres
- adequate covered areas &/or provision for bad weather
- Board to be aggressive in rectifying inadequate facilities
- bulk buying of materials & supplies for student and teachers
- budget for provisions for upgrading of technical aids (get corporate input)
- materials & resources should be purchased locally as much as possible
- recycle & reuse as much as possible
- books
- neighbourhood school buses

- more small school buses
- network of computers among schools and home
- more computer access - parent involvement
- more creative timetabling so children spend less time at schools

Community:

- community schools (facilities used in community)*
- community use of physical plants*
- adjusting schedule to utilize schools more*
- integrate/share resources with community services*
- include people who don't have children in school in use of plants*
- preschool through to seniors in community to be utilized in school district
- return of night school courses in school district (not just at Malaspina)
- ethnic communities involved in schools
- schools should facilitate community involvement but not during school time (outside of school hours, using school facilities)
- community to have access to school buildings
- Parks and Rec. provide programming - schools provide facilities
- schools to promote parent participation with their children into the community (eg. with seniors)
- look at different options for parent groups - untapped resource, district person to work with presidents of parent groups
- community programmers to be shared by municipality, school district, college
- expanded home schooling - one parent teaches small group (eg. cooking - parent released from work to do this)
- Pro-D for parents
- community professionals/experts seconded by the school district to teach courses

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

January 24/91

Zone 3

"Job satisfaction, motivation, productivity: need to create environment for this to happen. Being understaffed produces frustration at not being able to complete or attend to a task or complete tasks. District - evaluate job expectations in relation to time/personnel allotment."

ZONE MEETING

Monday, January 28, 1991 Forest Park Elementary, Zone 7

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough, Doug Sommers, Betty Shaw, Dave Sawbridge, George Duffell, Robyn Clements, Elizabeth Pennell, Marg Smith

TRUSTEE: Pam Negrin

HOSTS: Dorrie Roberts, P.A.C.
Pene Jesske, Principal

ATTENDANCE: 11

TOTAL: 22

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- pre-school teachers should be part of school team
- should have business English course for Grade 11's - to teach how to do resumes, business letters, etc.
- outreach program for drop-outs - make it easy and attractive to come back to regular programs
- assessment needs to be more objective - eg. levels systems - objective aspect to report - parents need to know where to help child
- appreciate fact that most teachers care a lot about children
- should be assessment procedures for pre-school entry
- parent participation in classrooms/"experts" from professions
- programs specifically related to drop-out prevention, leisure, work experience, etc.
- schools need to prepare students for the work force - more practical experience
- cultural exposure and appreciation okay but not indepth teaching
- programs to reach-out into community

PERSONNEL:

- team teaching should be encouraged as it meets personal needs of teachers and provides motivation as a half time person works three quarters time
- inservice training - consider options other than after school
- some consideration for those teachers who take on extra-curricular - could be monetary or time considerations
- personal well being for teachers important - staff development and specific curriculum training also

- teachers are caring and willing to make extra time to communicate with parents - very professional
- staff development should include retraining for changes of Year 2000
- collaboration/consultation model in labour relations to replace old confrontational model
- pro. d. - flex days with kids still at school - supervised by parents?
- acknowledge that teacher stress comes from dealing with students who come from lack of home support
- more support services
- more resource people needed for teachers to implement new programs

MATERIALS:

- covered areas for weather and busing
- best utilize school plans to avoid "piecemeal"
- more energy into defining school populations before school opens
- fly-swatters
- smaller elementary schools - under 300 students
- four semesters - three on and one off
- earthquake/flood proof
- better quality overhead projectors
- integrate computers into libraries
- plan/caution re: high tech in younger grades
- air conditioning
- safety procedures for children going to and from school - crosswalks, distance
- smaller class sizes
- adequate supplies for all schools
- plan schools so they can be used for something else in the future if student populations dwindle
- should be alternatives to portables as they isolate children and teacher
- more emphasis on recycling - in classrooms and school offices, especially of paper
- twelve month schooling - flexible, better use of buildings
- more use of schools by community in evenings and on weekends
- upgrade facilities where necessary for special needs students
- microfiche catalog of public library in each school library
- school district need to be futuristic about technology
- equality between schools with regards to equipment
- busing should depend on safety not distance
- classrooms should be larger
- good playground at every school
- more money for library books

COMMUNITY:

- it is the joint responsibility of the school district and the community to ensure the safety of children
- the more the community is involved in the schools, the more aware it will be of the needs of the schools
- city/parks and recreation could pay people to teach at night
- school district should be involved in night school
- more summer programs for children operating out of schools - P.A.C. sponsored
- school facilities should be used for after school care for children of working parents - paid caregivers
- cultivate relations with post-secondary education re: expectations ("family concept")
- expand partnerships - bring community people into schools to share knowledge
- after school use of facilities ie. computers - kids could teach parents
- pay teachers to be available for after school activities
- more seniors to have access to school system and facilities (sharing)
- "speakers' board" - have areas of expertise (people) sign up to speak in schools
- list community people willing to become resources in classrooms/schools

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

January 28/91

Zone 7

"I would like to see more respect and appreciation (shown in attitude and pay) for substitute teachers. As a 'sub' myself, I can say there's very little positive feedback for substitute teachers. I could sure use some more!"

Hearing? No

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

January 29/91

"I would like to know more about 'program 2000'. I would support new, additional, more, etc. if it can be shown that it is better! For instance, the 'open schooling' started, I think, in California, turned out (apparently) to be not so good".

Hearing? No

- "- proper lunch rooms
- positive school board commitment for community schools
- consideration given for school routes
- facilities for after school care with the facility itself

ZONE MEETING

January 29, 1991. Rutherford Elementary, Zone 9.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough, George Duffell, Doug Sommers, Betty Shaw, Dave Williamson, Tony Dobson, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith, Elizabeth Pennell

TRUSTEE: Randy Kocher

HOSTS: Patti Spencer: P.A.C.
Ron Sandland, Principal

ATTENDANCE: 20

TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 32

BRAINSTORMING:

PROGRAMS:

- work experience expanded to lower mainland
- more emphasis on past "tried and true" programs (3R's)
- programs for drop-out prevention
- schools to maintain academic focus
- courses- apprenticeships, alternatives to academics
- video library of work experience available outside Nanaimo
- keep status quo at certain levels
- s/b more social and recreation activities in community for young people - schools s/b involved in programs with community
- social and recreational activities only as they fit into the basic education
- put a secondary emphasis on life skills courses and primary basis on "tried and true"

PERSONNEL:

- parents must continue to feel welcome in schools - eg. free to drop into classrooms and to help
- teachers are doing a good job of educating our kids eg. special projects at an early age - education is fun and enjoyable
- teachers are in touch with the students - principal too
- teachers may get burned out with new programs - need support eg. time off
- teachers are struggling to ensure they implement programs and support children - they need support and tools - Intermediate Program creating anxiety
- teachers s/b allowed to stay at a school as long as they wish and not be forced to transfer
- s/b equity of transfers between elementary & secondary teachers

- "praise" for teachers
 - continue support for special needs - give teachers support for working with the students
- continue feedback from teachers to parents (formal and informal)
- recognize apprehension for parents around change
- provide evaluation stats re: program change effectiveness

MATERIALS:

- no carpets
- carpets (for students working on the floor)
- more natural light
- technically efficient schools
- dry, covered areas
- overhead (projectors), equipment updated
- high tech video projectors (get rid of old 16mm)
- more books - texts, library
- more technical software
- history books
- use recyclable, recycled materials
- more money on upgrading schools & good quality
- educate community re educations ie. "teach to teach"
- eliminate portables
- reduce size of classes - spend more money on teachers
- schools pair with businesses to share facilities
- swimming pools in sec. schools
- skating rinks
- no portables
- paved access and parking lots
- access to public libraries
- more public access to computer labs
- more computers
- schools s/have central core with modular classrooms
- all schools s/b standard - no haves & have-nots
- moveable walls between classrooms
- aesthetically pleasing buildings
- grounds - green grass, playgrounds
- equipment s/b field-tested by kids & teachers before purchase
- more science labs in elem schools
- larger classrooms
- gym & auditorium
- smaller elementary
- portables with washrooms
- handicap access
- adequate libraries - more books
- move public library into schools
- larger area for computers
- modular design to move to other populations
- wider use / greater interaction with resources (outside) to meet needs

COMMUNITY:

- s/b fund co-ordinators for community schools
- more seniors invited to schools to become part of audiences for fine arts productions
- community to generate interest in using school facilities
- more open-doors for seniors re: advocacy for education/ informed citizens
- pp - parents/ seniors to share their expertise with students
- invite cultural sharing (backgrounds)
- ff - reading programs by community members
- parents to commit to community to have children as participants in programs
- parents should support community school ie attend meetings
- publicity program to tell community about school facilities available for use
- better liason between city hall and sch. Board
- co-ordinator necessary for community school
- co-ordination of social services & statutory services through the schools
- groups s/b able to book facility through the school itself

WRITTEN COMMENTS

- "I would like to know more about 'program 2000'".
- I would only support new, additional, more, etc. if it can be shown that it is better! For instance, the "open schooling" started, I think, in California, turned out (apparently) to be not so good.
- proper lunch rooms
- positive school board commitment for community schools
- consideration given for school routes
- facilities for after school care within the facility itself

ZONE MEETING

Thursday, January 31/91. NDS. Zone 5

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough, George Duffell, Betty Shaw, Dave Williamson, Tony Dobson, Elizabeth Pennell, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith

TRUSTEE: Joy Geiger

HOSTS: Bruce Ryder, PAC chairperson

ATTENDANCE: 16

TOTAL: 26

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- realistic expectations as to what school can offer
- more work experience and more program opportunities particularly for non-academically oriented students
- more flexibility in programs with more rigidity in program expectations for achievement
- more emphasis on basics
- less structured classes so students can work at their own pace
- maintenance of standards for entrance to post-secondary education
- more computer programs
- more choice of courses and more time to take extra courses
- more flexible school day/year for timetabeling
- seasonal holidays spread out rather than long summer holiday
- more school days
- less school days
- more teacher aide support for special needs students
- more flexible school days
- maintain some special classes
- more integration (supported)
- more opportunity for re-entry into school for dropouts
- place to look after students/children from 8am to 5pm (before and after school programs at schools)
- more programs for gifted - more flexible programs
- program for pregnant students
- lunch program for all - universal
- school dismissal at 1:30pm on Wednesdays
- different measures of student achievement (certificate of mastery in areas)
- evening drop-in programs at schools
- lower student to teacher ratio in classrooms (real contact time)
- "duel entry" resources should be used to implement Year 2000

- accurate/honest assessment of student ability
- high academic standards

Personnel:

- better training for Yr. 2000 programs - retraining for teachers
- teachers better trained to understand/handle integration
- more support for teachers
- more understanding/tolerance for diverse teaching styles
- more support for teachers who have special needs students (aides)
- mandatory parent participation in schools
- use parents more
- qualified French teachers for elementary
- qualified computer teachers
- another look at binding arbitration rather than strike/lockout
- Pro-D days available to parents
- increase accessibility for parent volunteers in higher grades
- more co-operation/collegiality, less confrontation between management and staff
- teachers/personnel paid to run extra-curricular part of core (not an add-on)
- "I like gym". "I like art". (young students)
- encourage job sharing
- teachers should look at both sides of political issues with students and remain neutral
- recognition for coaching, student's council work, etc.
- enriched supervision for out-of-class activities (recess, noon hour, etc.)
- assess and evaluate teaching conditions (staff rooms, working areas)
- teachers should be more relaxed (eg. wait for explanations from students)
- massages for teachers
- fair due process/more democratic procedures from teachers to students
- recruit people with outstanding character, dedication, qualifications and a willingness to be accountable

Materials:

- classrooms vs portables
- smaller schools
- covered areas outside
- more washrooms
- handicapped accessible
- recycle garbage
- flexible rooms to handle various programs
- larger office space in existing schools
- multi-purpose rooms
- computers in libraries - multi-media libraries
- larger libraries

- more libraries
- libraries and computers in separate rooms
- bigger staff rooms
- more and bigger gyms, higher ceilings
- enough computers for all students in a class to use at the same time
- more equity in schools re: equipment and facilities
- stages in gyms
- more sheet music for bands
- larger classrooms
- more band equipment
- supply band instruments to all elementary students
- more playground equipment suitable for challenged students - accessible to wheelchairs
- swimming pools and programs
- safer parking lots - bigger
- do away with parking lots
- more bicycle racks
- spend more money on classrooms
- equipment first then classrooms
- smaller number of students per classroom
- sink in every classroom
- better ventilation in portables, if they have to be used
- science and art facilities, especially in elementary schools
- more windows
- funding for books re: Year 2000
- safer crosswalks
- safe, clean, bright, efficient and positive resources and facilities

Community:

- schools should be more open to community (visa versa)
- more flexible hours for teaching assignments (eg. evenings or days)
- honest support for community schools (funds, hired staff, facilities)
- invite local businesses to lend their expertise to students (apprenticeships)
- physical changes to schools so classrooms can be used after hours (eg. locked cupboards)
- more flexible classrooms - moveable walls to make larger rooms for community use
- more sharing of facilities with other agencies
- schools open for individual drop-ins (eg. planned programs for families, specific age groups, video nights, badminton) and not have to belong to group
- intensified liason between schools and college for transition
- more access to buses for college evening courses
- use school buses for community groups - sharing resources (eg church groups, club could rent)
- "A swimming pool because if you can't afford swimming lessons and good exercise" (young student)

- more information to general public about what schools are about
- co-ordination with day-care and after-school care
- tap into expanding retirement community (recruit their volunteer services)
- use local experts within community
- school children outreach into community (eg. retirement homes)
- more field trips to community facilities (biological station, Harmac, museum)
- environmental education programs
- seniors invited into schools
- adapting counseling programs for student to include community career planning (eg. Harmac)
- training programs for parents/adults re: understanding and helping kids with changes in education (Yr. 2000)

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

January 31/91

Zone 5

"Girls should be allowed to interact with all boys football teams (gender fairness)."

"Bigger lockers; safe, easy parking lots."

"To improve teachers/students relationships (especially high school students.)"

Hearing? No

"Instead of having so many portables the schools could attach another building or another level for one level schools."

Hearing? No

ZONE MEETING

February 4, 1991, Rock City, Zone 8.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Dave Sawbridge, George Duffell, Ted Killough, Betty Shaw, Doug Sommers, Tony Dobson, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith, Jennifer O'Neil

TRUSTEE: Nicole Hennessey for June Harrison

HOST: George Duffell, Rock City Principal
Ian Main, P.A.C. chairperson

ATTENDANCE: 13

TOTAL: 21

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- curriculum development - look at area jobs before development and adapt to job opportunities
- more flexible timetabling for all students to access courses of interest and/or fun
- local "experts", professionals speak to students re career development at the elementary level
- continue to improve work experience
- daycare services for teenage mothers expanded to all secondary schools
- band program introduced earlier
- P.E. should be daily activity
- bring back lifetime sports programs (arts also)
- reporting assessment should be a cooperative effort between teacher, parent and student (enhance self-esteem, learning as a process)
- more emphasis on the learning process rather than cramming for exams
- look at the job situation globally ie Pacific Rim, before planning curriculum
- 100% of curriculum should be planned by province not local boards
- should look at mentorship more seriously
- students need thinking and creative skills in order to use leisure time well - quality of life skills should be taught by schools
- librarian should be full time in every school - tied into community libraries
- more emphasis on games in P.E. rather than competition - more preparation for leisure time - everybody plays rather than just those who can make the team

- P.E. activities should be closer to leisure activities such as golf and less team oriented
- more arts also
- more formal assessment in older years
- teachers should be better qualified for what they are teaching especially in the trades but in academics also

Personnel:

- cooperative negotiations re labour relations - less conflict between management, staff and trustees
- teacher assessment concerning program and problems to be done by parents
- community members ie. seniors to supplement teaching/teachers
- teaching positions should be expanded to people other than those who are university certified (some forms of qualifications assessment)
- workshops for community members to invite them into schools
- secondary system to go year round to match work experiences beyond school
- be more creative in facilitating student learning - working - families
- celebrate what is done well within the school system (communicate the positives)
- pleased with how school staff works as a team
- teachers should be qualified for the courses they teach
- more teaching staff - some would be academic educators and others would be there to deal with social issues ie. child care workers
- teaching positions should be made more attractive to those in the workplace ie. don't need degree to teach trades, rather experience would count
- someone with certain skills could teach those and be paid for it ie. expand Artists in the Schools
- teaching hours should be adjusted to fit in with business hours and after school daycare should be available
- 12 month school year divided into modules - students choose modules they will attend - this would allow them to work if necessary
- have options of day or evening school for students
- parents need to be made aware of what staff does for school out of class time - they would be more appreciated then

Materials:

- more "portable" - parts can be moved and still be safe
- after hours access - rooms to facilitate meetings, etc.
- community facilities and equipment - joint funding by school district, parks and rec. etc.
- physical plant should be well supplied (ie. kitchen) and well kept - more comfortable and home-like - more attention to details
- material other than asphalt for play areas
- computers in classrooms rather than a separate lab
- more field trips
- businesses to sponsor schools/classes financially
- all school facilities should be wheel-chair accessible
- school libraries and community libraries should be joint system - all open to adults and community
- better use of money and better use of facilities if public library money was put into high school libraries and those were opened to the public
- washrooms should be better maintained and should have hot water
- more basketball hoops on the playground and more asphalt play areas
- more covered areas for wet weather
- more access to computers for all children
- every school should have a bus for more frequent field trips
- schools should be kept to a reasonable size of 300 to 400 students at both the elementary and secondary level

Community:

- open computer labs, gyms to seniors and larger community
- community to support schools
- city, M.S.S. & H., health unit and school district get involved with social issues such as hot lunches, day care for teen parents etc.
- Inter-Ministerial Children's Committee should be more active within the community in the education of public and in communication
- evening programs offered within the schools by parks and Rec, Malaspina College, etc.
- school buildings belong to community and people should have reasonable access to classrooms, etc. at no cost
- schools should be routinely used for daycare

- commercialism in schools should be avoided ie. catering services - students can't raise money by selling hot dogs as the service has a monopoly - catering service should be subsidized and the contract should be limited to lunches only
- equal access to school district resources and services ie. rural and small schools should be equal to large schools

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

February 4, 1991

Zone 8

"Sometimes when teachers are having a bad day they pick one person and pick on them ALL DAY!! I mean it's not our fault and even sometimes they say things that hurt our feelings and embarrass us in front of our classmates."

Hearing? yes

Elementary Student

"I think there should be more interesting books in the library. And start school at least one half hour later and end one half hour later. I think teachers should give the Primary student the same abilities as the Intermediate (Well, most of them anyway)."

Hearing? no

"Why do they have showers if they don't use them? And we are not even allowed to use them. Maybe 2 out of 400 people use the showers in a year and maybe even two years."

"We should get to pick or vote on our lunch monitors. Because if we don't like or enjoy them or have fun with them, I'm sure that they won't enjoy their lunch period."

"Better books in the library (Babysitters' Club & Sweet Valley High) and more field trips. The kids in a class should get to vote on their lunch monitors. Lip sync contest. Grade fives should be able to go skiing as well as the grade sevens."

Hearing? no

"Make each subject relate to real life instead of just copying notes from the blackboard and memorizing to pass a test. 'Report cards for teachers' to be completed by parents with their child reviewing teacher performance - positive and negative feedback PARENT/STUDENT EVALUATION FORM. Four months on - one month off, with schools open all year. Would like an agenda for monthly P.A.C. meetings."

Hearing? no

"All course/programs are incredibly underfunded. It seems that the 'newest' program (ie computers get huge amounts of funding while other programs (ie auto mechanics, drafting) have absolutely zero funding. The program deteriorates, there is no teacher/student interest, and a program that would be extremely critical to the local economy in the future is lost because of administrators who only follow the latest trend and not the whole conceptual picture."

"More counselling services - one on one meetings with students about plans for the future - at least one meeting a year to discuss progress in exploring interests (high school level) and finding ways to reach goals. Students need to be informed about programs, requirements, opportunities for alternative learning experiences (ie exchanges, conferences, clubs for special interests). I've come across problems with uncertainty about students' futures because they aren't ready to choose a specific field since they haven't had to explore all avenues available to them.

Hearing? no

ZONE MEETING

February 5, 1991. Woodbank Elementary, Zone 2.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough, George Duffell, Doug Sommers, Betty Shaw, Dave Williamson, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith, Elizabeth Pennell

TRUSTEE: (Absent with regrets) Nicole Hennessey

HOSTS: Peter Grover, Principal

ATTENDANCE: 18

TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 26

BRAINSTORMING:

PROGRAMS:

- more opportunities for 2nd language at earlier age - within community schools
- develop a value system that fits with cultures, community
- inform parents about how kids are taught now
- building self-esteem (valuing differences)
- more area counselling / peer counselling
- assessment that involves "concrete" as well as narrative
- more parent education re: Yr. 2000
- more inclusion of local "experts" from community & business
- co-ordination of programs / times with pre-school (District wide)
- more TA's in classrooms
- restructure lunch hours - play then eat
- more instruction happening outdoors
- rearrange school year - shorter semesters - fewer lengthy holidays
- more emphasis on core concepts (3 r's)
- more accomodation of different learning styles
- parents s/b taught how to use computers so they can help
- more emphasis on basics, - math, reading, spelling
- more community schools
- more integrated environment studies
- studies of different cultures
- s/have money necessary before implementing new curriculum
- encourage buddying between younger /older students
- more history studies
- reporting must be balanced
- greater involvement of seniors in schools
- continued fostering of "partnerships" in schools
- shop and cooking facilities (hands on) at elementary level

- teachers/AO's need training to deal with children with problems - more counsellors
- time needed for AO's to deal with children with problems
- review mandatory transfer of teachers
- counsellors need to work with entire families not just student
- parents s/b encouraged to think of teachers as their valued, skilled employees
- smaller class size therefore more teachers
- more integration of services
- teachers s/b "people" people - need excellent communication skills
- smaller scale organizational structure - secondary schools s/b in smaller, more meaningful units - for communication
- allow students to evaluate teachers - have a part in evaluation
- mini-crash courses for parents to help children with courses
- parents encouraged to be in classrooms
- parents to communicate their needs re: children, to the teachers - joint effort - no hierarchy
- school to be hub for community centre
- use schools for evening college courses
- more exposure for children to work places
- budgets to allow equal access to facilities / events
- local community boards to operate under larger board

MATERIALS:

- one unit buildings
- larger classrooms
- small elementary (less than 350)
- better ventilation
- more space for itinerant personnel
- handicapped access
- no carpets in schools
- more natural lighting (vs fluorescent)
- provision for daycare in schools
- better playground equipment
- fenced schoolyards
- aesthetically more pleasing (plants, fountains, primary colours)
- better library facilities
- computers for every room for all schools
- pitch on roofs- so balls can roll off
- medical rooms
- consistent climate control
- more gym equipment
- sound-proof classrooms
- compost facilities
- storage for community items
- outdoor water faucet
- more textbooks

- more video equipment in classrooms
- science equipment (spending)
- laser disc players vs videos
- more forested areas around schools
- more field trip allocation money
- budget for busing for team sporting events
- send more money south
- more local autonomy - for community
- more help for AO's with behavior problems (sic)
- heated student washrooms
- disabled facilities built into school not added on later
- places to store bike helmets
- hand-operated swings for handicapped
- hoot racks
- garden space planned into building
- books for library - encyclopedia for classrooms
- more first aid equipment - earthquake
- more computers) where to
- personnel, salaries) spend
- decentralize allocation of funds
- more buses so children can get home faster
- more Japanese as 2nd language in schools
- smaller class sizes
- buses that wait longer for late students
- more counselling services
- more practical buildings - plan for expansion
- smaller classrooms
- high school for Cedar
- windows that open in every room
- better storage
- running water in portables - washrooms also
- night alarm system means cannot keep pets in schools
- covered areas for patios
- exit door (outside) in each classroom
- better drop off areas
- better field drainage
- drinking fountains in halls
- office near main entrance
- cafeterias
- bigger gyms, stages, and stage lighting
- louder PA systems and louder dismissal bells
- parents s/b able to borrow texts and materials from school to help children at home

COMMUNITY:

- math textbooks s/b easier to understand
- greater integration of community resources - facilities within school for MSS&H Public Health - social workers work out of schools
- move school Board meeting to all zones so easier for parents to attend
- school under same roof as community centre
- more classes for parent and child eg. sign language

- more sports programs such as swimming and skating - for outlying schools
- active liaison between S.B. and regional district - to get community centers such as in Ladysmith
- work experience programs at an earlier age - classes visit workplaces
- schools s/b involved in enhancing local environment eg. planting trees at dump
- s/b role for community volunteers in the schools
- s/b teacher training time to learn about specific communities eg. Cedar - resources
- apprenticeship programs with unions, industry
- lengthen school day - 2 shifts of staffs
- students raise money through environmental clean-up
- screening of volunteers and inservice and training re ethics
- noon supervisors (paid) s/b screened as children come to them with problems

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

FEBRUARY 5, 1991

Zone 2

- "1. Budget should reflect cost of including local experts/professionals as guest lecturers. We are eager to become involved but cannot be expected to volunteer on a continuing basis.
2. With rapid advancements in technology (ie computers, etc.), greater opportunities need to be provided for teachers to upgrade their abilities in keeping with change.
3. General comment - very informative session and I feel privileged to have had an opportunity to contribute. Support from a greater number of parents will be forthcoming if such sessions are continued."

Hearing? no

"Personnel - board office very top heavy - is this necessary?"

"Decrease labour tension during negotiations. Teachers are a very important and visible component of the community. They are easy targets in times of restraint and this aspect is used by school board negotiators and they use this as propaganda. Trustees should appreciate the difficulty and complexity of teaching. The job is much harder than it looks!"

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Mailed in:

"I have some comments that I didn't really feel totally comfortable putting forward at the meeting I attended so have chosen to pass them along on paper. I feel our district is doing a really fine job in many, many ways. We have very dedicated and enthusiastic staff who are working hard to implement the changes that must come about in our system in the next decade. There are many opportunities for inservice and I have participated in as many of these as I possibly could. I have gotten to the point recently however, that I feel like I am drowning. I have given a great deal of my own time to learn new techniques and strategies for my classroom. I feel very excited about many of the changes I've made but at the same time a little unsure. It's difficult to make the major changes that we're making without feeling a little insecure. At the same time we are under a great deal of pressure from parents, and the community to explain ourselves, and while I welcome that opportunity, I usually feel that even after explaining the philosophy, people remain very skeptical. I feel that a great deal is being expected of teachers now more than ever. It's exhausting. I dearly love teaching but I'm finding it very difficult to achieve a balance in my life. I teach part time because I have a young family and I find it very demanding trying to keep up with all the duties of both jobs. I know I'm not the only one feeling this way and I feel that we may lose many excellent and dedicated teachers in the next few years to burn out.

I'm afraid I don't have any suggestions to solve this problem, but I feel that it's a problem that parents, board members and senior staff need to be aware of. I appreciate the opportunity to submit my comments."

INFORMATION GATHERING

February 13/91. Secondary Students

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Ted Killough, Dave Williamson, Tony Dobson, George Duffell, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith, Elizabeth Pennell, Doug Sommers, Betty Shaw

PLACE: CRC

ATTENDANCE: 53 students 2 adults

Cedar Junior Secondary	6	
Five Acres	5	1 adult
John Barsby	7	
Ladysmith Senior Secondary	8	
NDSS	8	
Northfield Alternate School	2	1 adult
VAST	2	
Wellington	9	
Woodlands	6	

TOTAL: 64

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- students should have more input into courses - what they want to learn
- teachers should vary course for students who are repeating
- students who have repeated a couple of times should have access to special classes
- students should have choice in timing of course (eg. which semester)
- students should have a spare block in grade 11 and 12
- shorter school day - 1 hour less
- no double blocking
- same programs at every school
- more drama opportunities in elementary
- students should be able to go from an alternate course to a regular (with good marks)
- more study skills - memory
- make courses more relevant to daily life
- social studies should cover larger area (eg. not just ancient Europe)
- just basic math compulsory unless you plan to be a mathematician
- more career training courses
- courses should have less content
- more work experience
- more Canadian history
- more current events
- more computer and electronics courses

- Grade 11 and 12 should be more like university -
respect that student's don't have to be there
- should be able to see final exam papers
- more frequent mark results so you can see if you need
to do extra work
- more extra-curricular activities
- less emphasis on exams - more on class work
- PE should be voluntary
- no reward for perfect attendance
- shouldn't have to take Music in elementary school
- music should be mandatory
- class time shorter to increase attention span
- lunch hour shorter - out earlier
- reward students for perfect attendance
- more scholarship opportunities
- awards for academics and sports
- awards for strong efforts
- should be easier to transfer from alternate back to
regular programs
- schools should make students more independent
- more field trips
- more sports programs
- PE - health/medical not just the sports
- PE - teach swimming
- more relation of class work to real life
- more drug and alcohol programming and information
- rescheduled, more balanced programming (eg. heavy/easy
semester)
- more choices of programs
- teacher should not teach same subject for 4 blocks in
a row
- consistent marking system for subjects
- more speakers from community (eg resume writing)
- timetabling so there is not a loss of a year between
taking a course again
- make grade 8's more comfortable at high school
- have courses sequenced (eg. math 10, then math 11
without having to take another course (drama) in
between)
- unbiased teachers (eg in social studies)
- driver's education
- more student access to marks
- less emphasis on final mark grade
- more emphasis on final exam
- more intense/difficult courses at alternate
- grade 11 and 12's should be separated from the 8 to
10's so there can be an emphasis on more adult
relationships
- courses geared to future/current
- more specific career information
- more student/teacher discussions about everything
- 8 to 12 alternative schools
- all teachers at grade 12 should have masters - not be
teaching grade 8's

- more current socials studies, not just history
- back to 8 to 10 and 11 and 12
- no finals if marks are over 85%
- PE more than just basketball
- involve students in conversations 1 class
- guide education to job selections
- make academics as accessible as vocational courses
- driver's education programs
- upgrading should be continuous for teachers
- drafting program for alternate schools
- more than just 8 choices per semester

MATERIALS

- free buses for field trips
- students take public buses to school
- enough lockers
- more buses - no waiting after school
- more trash cans on grounds
- unbreakable windows
- covered walkways
- more cooking teachers
- better tutorial services
- more opportunities for elective courses
- drop restrictions on fund-raising purchases
- more teachers - smaller classes
- more language options
- spend more money on academics rather than sports, etc
- more specialized rooms for groups such as student council
- better communication systems
- swimming pool for gym
- more track and field facilities
- enclosed area for smokers
- tennis courts on field
- student discount for public buses
- student murals on walls
- more opportunities for elective courses
- wider and less obstructed halls
- bigger lockers
- better heating systems
- student lounges
- bigger desks
- separate labs from classrooms
- bigger gyms
- computer links to classrooms
- covered outer walkways
- more up-to-date electronic equipment eg. VCR's
- don't use colored paper - not recyclable
- money s/b used for more practical things to be used directly by students
- bigger and better equipped libraries
- school store to sell school supplies
- more access to shops - lunchtimes etc.
- more \$ on field trips and extra-curricular
- \$ for more qualified French Immersion teachers
- more fire extinguishers
- skylights in hallways
- schools in community for walking access
- better field drainage
- more buses for field trips
- later buses for after school activities
- healthier cafeteria food
- more shop equipment
- improve schools

- more specialized teachers
- more elective opportunities
- earthquake equipment, supplies, buildings
- fewer portables - get rid of some
- better student phone facilities
- covered area for bus students
- new computer software and equipment
- student's council more in charge of \$ rather than going through principal
- hot food in cafeteria at reasonable prices
- buy local at best prices
- more direct access to students' council to use school materials
- more \$ on things for students
- cafeterias for all schools
- larger classrooms
- alarm systems to portables
- more windows
- more computer facilities
- windows in halls / skylights
- more band equipment
- better equipment / drama
- back to workbooks - fewer handouts
- local business and industry to donate equipment
- more art facilities/supplies for painting
- more drafting desks
- better wheelchair access
- brighter colours
- air circulation improved
- gym equipment
- recycling bins in all classes
- more science labs
- bigger band room
- add more washrooms
- more up-to-date school books

PERSONNEL:

- each school should have a full time secretary
- small schools should have more course opportunities
- should be a lot more counselling
- should be medical rooms for alternate schools
- teachers shouldn't get into trouble for showing unedited movies
- all teachers should take first aid courses
- should be more academic streaming to meet learning needs
- teachers should concentrate on one specialized area
- teachers should do things that kids enjoy, not just what they enjoy
- people should be more sympathetic to their teachers
- teachers should continue class parties and celebrations
- the curriculum should be less crammed so that school is not so rushed
- there should be more homerooms - at least weekly
- eliminate S.S.R. (sustained silent reading)
- health nurse should be in the school more often
- there should be a minimum of two teachers for each course offered so that students can choose
- students should learn and be given help in class not at lunch
- elementary schools should have electives ie. sewing
- principals at elementary should be geared to grades 7 and 8, not just primary
- administration should have more visible things to do so that kids see they are busy
- teachers should accept fact that kids sometimes forget things
- should be a yearly review of teacher conduct
- hall monitors are not necessary and should be done away with
- every teacher should be required to do a minimum amount of extra-curricular
- teachers should be paid for doing extra-curricular
- all teachers should have first aid training
- we need more motivated teachers who hand back assignments quicker
- should be a more regular time and place for teachers to give extra help
- teachers should cultivate more personal relationships with students
- there should be teachers on staff to help students with correspondence courses
- teachers need to be more understanding and patient
- should be teachers who visit homes to help correspondence students
- more counselors at the elementary level
- more career and guidance counselling
- all schools should be treated equally for activities, events, etc.

- should be better emergency facilities and plans
- teachers should not eat or drink in class when students are not allowed to
- should be less transfer of teachers so that they get to know students
- teachers need special patience/help
- should be better medical coverage for teachers on field trips
- kids do enjoy band trips
- more teaching by teachers and less reading the book by students
- more teachers to support extra-curricular
- two way respect for/by students/teachers
- male counsellors for male students and female counsellors for female students
- teachers shouldn't have to give up lunch hour to help students
- teachers should not drink coffee in class if students not allowed to
- teachers should make learning more fun by using cooperative learning groups
- there should be more incentive from teachers for students to do well
- more recognition needed for excellent teaching
- there should be positive teacher/student relationships
- grade 8 counsellors should have a meeting with students at the beginning of the year so they know who they can go to for help
- teachers should be less prejudiced against certain students
- should be long term contracts for teachers
- teachers should be more specialized at the grade 11 and 12 level for college preparation
- teachers should be fairer in conflict resolutions
- teachers should have students mark papers in class in order to make it a learning experience
- should have either smaller schools/classes or more homerooms
- should be more support materials for teachers
- no pay for extra-curricular
- more counsellors and teacher assistants
- teacher strategies should include all students
- there should be teachers around at lunch for help
- students should be able to serve detentions at lunch
- teachers should take turns for lunch hour supervision so they can help students
- should be mandatory for teachers to take a "Talking to Teens" course
- teachers should teach a specialty area
- should be better hospital/homebound education
- teachers should stay home when they are sick so as to spread their germs
- teachers should respect students as people

- there should be individual student help available
- teachers should be more informed ie. earthquakes
- there should be more substitute teachers for specific subjects
- there should be more integrated age classes
- students should be able to communicate directly with administration
- teachers coming out of university need more work experience before they begin teaching
- we need more new teachers

COMMUNITY:

- school hours should be flexible for students who work ie. weekends, evenings
- more counsellors, especially at the beginning of the year when students are choosing courses
- community should have more say in what happens at school
- band members should be willing to come in early or stay late for practice
- teachers should deal with student problems at lunch or after school not in the evenings
- open all schools, including alternates, once or twice a year so that teachers and students can explain what is happening
- more opportunities for foreign trips - more places and different criteria for choosing who goes
- combined yearly dance for all schools at Civic Arena
- weekly work experience in chosen career area in grade 11 and 12
- more student exchange opportunities
- school facilities should be more accessible to the community
- parents should have a lesser role in schools - emphasis should be on the student, not the parents
- parents should not be able to ban materials from schools
- parents should not have to sign everything for students
- parents should have to go to school for a day to see how hard it is
- more community help with keeping the school grounds clean
- extra activities should not just be based on academic standards
- monetary support for student travel
- more local presenters from business community
- trade schools should present career options
- less emphasis on professional ie. law and more emphasis on alternate trades
- night courses for adults to use school facilities
- single parents have difficulty participating
- community should be more involved in meetings like this one
- students should not be suspended - there should be inschool suspensions instead
- community groups should use students as a source of volunteers
- should be more frequent assessment of schools
- should be easier access to schools after hours
- should be easier access to counsellors after hours as crises don't always happen on schedule
- confidentiality should be maintained by counsellors
- problems with students/teachers should be sorted out between the parties involved, not parents

- students should have more respect for teachers' privacy/lives
- people who set school size should be required to visit - numbers don't mean anything
- schools should be open nights and weekends for sports and use of shops, not for classes
- time accomodations made for band students, not just a.m. or after school
- students should be able to phone teachers at home
- students should not be able to phone teachers at home
- teachers should work shifts so that they are in place at school in the evening for students who need them
- older students should help younger students
- students should have more access to community resource buildings ie. pools, rec. centres
- should be more business management courses in elementary schools with community resource speakers
- should be a program to explain employee rights and duties
- work experiences should be a course so that students don't miss other school work
- more college (post secondary) counselling for course selection
- schools should be open to adults for education with daycare available
- more learning should b done at school and less at home

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

February 16/91

Student Forum

Materials: "School bus size should be suited to the size of the group. eg. small bus for one basketball teams, big bus for two.

Personnel: Language teachers should get some practise in the language they want to teach. eg. French teacher goes to France for a year.

Enthusiastic teachers make it fun for the teacher.

Gym teachers should take themselves less seriously.

I think lunch hours shouldn't be shortened.

Teachers and principals should not assume guilt (in students [?]).

Sex education shouldn't be taught the same year after year."

"I think students should have more chances to give their opinion on the school system".

"Band and fine arts marks not included in marks for honour roll.

Teachers should be aware of students problems at home so they know where the problems stem from."

"New sports facilities."

"- a counsellor that will be there 5 days a week

- covered area for smokers

- split up your academics with your electives

- better heating systems

- more clubs

- more elective opportunities

- clean area with more garbage cans/recycling boxes in all classes

- more sports programs"

"I think there should be a mandatory political course so when we go out to vote we understand just what our vote means of just include it with the consumer education course. I think kids should see and try to understand just exactly what a teacher's job includes."

- "- longer lunch hours
- no double blocks
- music in the morning on announcements
- more understanding teachers
- bigger lockers, halls, classrooms
- more colourful schools"

discussion? maybe

"I have been extremely upset with the labour relations disturbances. Every 2 years this seems to come up again and it seems to be a traditional 2 year occurrence. It hurts the grade 12's of that year the most. I think this was a wonderful idea. It shows that you really care about what the students think. This should become a yearly thing."

- "- have a recess of cookie break between classes
- have a better tutoring system
- fundraising for travelling opportunities
- daycare for mother students
- more sympathy for teacher hours"

- "- more drama equipment
- there should be more counsellors
- secretaries should be more nice and caring and helpful
- there shouldn't be double blocks, another class should be added
- longer lunch hours
- better food in the cafeteria"

- "- there should be more info given on colleges and universities
- the high schools should mix with the elementary
- there should be more uniformity in schools
- schools should be more strict more like the military"

"Conference room for clubs and teams."

- "- better library facilities
- allow students to sign out videos
- should be able to pick counsellors"

"extra cover outside for smokers
vending machines
more lockers"

"- I think students should be able to make their own
schedule, example, 10am - 4pm.

- longer lunches
- instead of a buzzer, play music"

"- less possible administration/

- community schools
- community groups should take action in schools/offer
courses/sponsor teams
- teacher who support or take part in extra curricula
activities should be paid more than those who only
work 9 - 3."

"- motivated teachers

- fully teach the basis of education until it is under-
stood, any branches off it can become electives
- safe school facilities
- communication
- teaching should involve at least one extra curricular
activity whether it be sports, dance supervision, fine
arts or after school help"

"- kids shouldn't be streamed for how smart they are,
eg. L.S.S. gifted, regular, core

- teachers have their own life too"

"Travel trips (eg. Japan) are too hard to be accepted into"

"- shops should be more involved with new projects

- elementary schools are good because there is only one
teacher and there is more bonding there - there should
be one main teacher for high school, going out of that
class for elective classes
- counsellors should see you at least once a year"

Discussion? yes

- more choice for students on the way they learn in class
- much better choices for electives
- teachers shouldn't be able to take marks off for someone talking
- more information should be given to students about courses needed to get into a wide variety of colleges and universities. in about grade 8-9-10"

"The teachers should not yell at students cause they don't know how to do something, they should explain it. Students should not be given 'D.T.s', I mean it's just like being grounded and it does not do anything for either the teachers or the students. We should always be away, not part of the regular high schools."

1. we should have vending machines and a cafeteria in alternate programs
 2. better parking
 3. science equipment
 4. more say on what sports we are doing
 5. more activities in life skills
 6. computers in alternate programs
 7. showers in alternate programs
 8. better transportation
 9. the buses should go further out
 10. full time secretary"
- "science equipment, shop equipment, computers, medical room, better parking"

"For alternate schools: vending machines, science equipment, beds/couches, stereos, new pool table, shop equipment, gymnastic equipment, computers"

"gymnastic equipment"

"Science & chemistry labs for alternate programs.
Same work as regular programs.
Smoking shelters for warmth
Courses for what job you want in the near future
Teachers shouldn't yell at you
More moral support for confidence"

Discussion? yes

- "- music instead of buzzer to indicate class changes
- brighter colours in classroom and hallways
- more washrooms/bigger hallways
- 11/12 grades in one school/more adult oriented for older students
- lessons on how to study and memory techniques
- more in-class discussions and letting students express their ideas - bring class students together
- let students work on projects together more
- education on how to help save our environment - more recycling bins, and where to take cans, papers etc. to be recycled
- more comfortable seating area
- not so much homework - kids have part-time jobs you know!
- shorter school hours - kids get too restless and that causes tensions & stress for teachers and other students

"What about student/teacher field trips to help both get to know more about the other. On environmental awareness how about nature walks with a naturalist through Morrell so the ecosystem can be better explained to everyone. If a student finds the college course they are interested in the school should help them receive the pre-requisite for that course if they are in a school like VAST."

"I think we need to do something to change the stereotypical outlook of the community on teenagers, because alot of people think that all teenagers are problem makers and thy aren't willing to help us or our school because of the stereotype."

"shop teachers labs
 driver ed
 more sports
 outdoor education
 library
 game room
 better transportation
 smoking space"

IDEAS COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

- following Student Forum Feb. 13, 1991
- did not indicate whether or not he wished to present a brief.

IDEAS:

- People who try their best should be given an award for this.
- It should be easier for a student to re-enter the regular school system from an alternate program than back into another alternate program.
- Nominal wage given as an incentive to work experience students (students must then be screened more intensely).
- Have those who actually make decisions visit the schools to see for themselves numbers do not always show how crowded a facility is.
- Mandatory for teachers to take courses on public speaking.
- Mandatory first aid for all staff.
- Teachers should be updated even if they have a masters degree.
- New computers (updated).
- Software (more high tech.).
- More business management courses, speakers from the community.
- Community should attend more meetings such as this to have knowledge of what is happening.
- Should be able to continue education through an alternate college program.
- Alternate educational facilities should give students a choice of programs.

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Mailed in:

"Please make it possible for wheelchairs to access the playground area and equipment (ground is often rocks, pebbles or sawdust). *even if they are only able to be closer to where the action is. One or tow cut-out tire swings would offer support for students that need it. Schools should be wheelchair accessible. Continue to support integration. I feel teachers should have a base class size ie 24, over this should reflect in their pay - each additional student would result in x dollars per student extra.

Use of a draw system (not alphabetical) for trustee elections (all elections)"

"The implementation of a school food program that meets 1/3 of nutritional needs is a bandaid we need in these times. The community's support of a feeding program should be a priority. Children who are hungry or poorly nourished cannot begin to access education as well as a child who is well nourished. Dollars spent on lunch programmes pay in the short term and the long term."

Discussion? yes Brief? yes

Seniors' Zonal Meeting

Wednesday, February 20, 1991

Bowen Park Seniors' Centre

Task Force Present: Dave Williamson, Robyn Clements, Betty Shaw, Doug Sommers, Marg Smith

Public Present: 3*

*It should be noted that the following brainstorming ideas came mainly from one person, a long retired district principal.

BRAINSTORMING:

PROGRAMS:

- money given by government to ethnic groups for facilities should be used for E.S.L. teaching
- lottery funds should be available to education or to some facets of education
- education should be divorced from politics ie. the Ministry should be a crown corporation like B.C. Hydro
- curriculum development should be updated and revised frequently
- the 3 R's should be a basic part of any curriculum development ie. ability to write a letter of application
- pre-school schooling should be less competitive - there should be less urgency by parents to get young children into pre-school
- information should be available for those parents who would like to teach their pre-schoolers (ie. 4 year olds) at home
- seniors could tutor students ie. in French
- work experience should be broadened - more career areas covered and more businesses and industries involved

PERSONNEL:

- give high school students (and any young people who are dissatisfied with the goals they had in high school) the opportunity to spend a day in the faculty of education at one of the universities
- teachers should be allowed more time at a school before being transferred
- there should be a group at district level to decide the placement of teachers - to ensure rounded staffs in every school ie. good mix of English, math teachers, etc.
- teacher evaluations by A.O.'s should be carefully

- looked at to see if problems need to be solved ie. staff members who do not get along
- second opinions are necessary so there should be ongoing evaluation by someone above the principal
- mediation is the best solution in labour relations
- A.O.'s should know their teachers outside of school and should find out their interests and enthusiasms
- every school needs one person (principal) who pulls the organization together
- technology should be encouraged in all ways

MATERIALS:

- secondary schools should have social studies labs (perhaps in conjunction with a weather lab) which have map rails, geographical and historical equipment - should be a place for hands on learning
- there should be a proper first aid room in every school - the school nurse could work from there
- there should be wheel chair access to all floors in schools and to every entrance
- there should be more after hours access to computers for those students who don't have them at home
- more money for computers
- should be equal opportunity (vis a vis equipment) in every school
- zonal (area) purchasing as opposed to single school purchasing
- schools should have more say in the purchasing of equipment and supplies
- children should be educated in the nearest possible facility - the least distance a child has to travel to school the better
- 500 students should be maximum in any school - secondary and elementary - in that size school, teachers can get to know the parents as well as the students

COMMUNITY:

- there is an opportunity for the school district to become involved in community education as Malaspina is becoming so crowded
- community education should be spread around the district in several locations as Malaspina too difficult for adults (seniors) to get to
- wider use of school buses ie. could be used for transporting tourists in the summer
- should be seat belts on school buses
- V.A.S.T. should be expanded to more locations throughout the district
- some of the public buildings used by schools should be upgraded
- construct a "Seniors" unit for use in schools

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS from Seniors' Forum

* is interested in presenting a brief on the involvement of Seniors in the schools.

IDEAS:

1. Adopt a Senior (grandparent) - with regular contact
2. Special occasions (Mother's Day, birthday, Grandmother's Day)
3. Have Seniors visit - tea and entertainment
4. Visits to Seniors' living areas (Buttertubs Marsh, regular)
5. Handicrafts (raffia baskets)
6. Music and art
7. Multicultural - talents
8. Adopt a "shut-in" (phone, errands)
9. Use of media (paper, radio) for written (dictated) articles
10. Museum tours with Seniors present
11. Foods (Seniors prepare or supply recipe)
12. Develop a Seniors unit (embrace all subjects)
13. Biographies
14. Folder collection - a year or two

ZONE MEETING

March 23, 1991 Task Force Zonal, Board Office

STEERING COMMITTEE PRESENT: George Duffell, Dave Williamson, Betty Shaw, Elizabeth Pennell, Robyn Clements, Tony Dobson, Dave Sawbridge, Marg Smith

ATTENDANCE: 13

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- students and teachers interact with primary producers (industry) to make more informed decisions
- encourage teachers to have degrees in their teaching areas
- more science programs at the elementary level
- better use of staff skills in subject areas
- students more involved in choosing/deciding programs that fit their area of interest
- more effort to address skills and attitudes expected from the work community
- regular feedback forums from students/parents/system for ongoing change and direction
- understand significance of ethical behaviour
- training for self-care and independence for students
- mastery and criterion learning/teaching
- listening more to student messages to the educational system
- local content in all program areas (relevant to district)
- more partnership between teaching and future learning and work related areas
- expand work experience program to include feedback from business (ongoing programs)
- vocational 'instructors' to provide solid background in content area
- training in "learning to learn" study skills programs
- teacher as facilitator vs. lecturer - need inservice and training
- minimum standards should be achieved before student moves on
- drop out rate (self esteem) at secondary level should be addressed
- should identify potential drop outs
- students and parents should have representation at school staff meetings - both elementary and secondary
- more involvement of seniors and others in carrying out of school programs
- should utilize staff skills fully
- hands-on community learning - materials should be drawn from community

- teachers should be masters at cooperative learning skills and concepts from K. through 12
- the entire system should not be skewed to drop out problem - system cannot be everything to everybody
- should be flexible timetabling at the secondary level
- introduce creative program planning at Malaspina education faculty for local programming in SD 68
- use data base to access research and what is happening elsewhere
- work experience staff needs to understand requirements and limitations of businesses - should restructure program to be more flexible
- need for skills (how to) for lifelong learning - entire school system - teachers as facilitators not lecturers so children take charge of their learning
- more interaction with community based resources re drug and alcohol abuse
- students should get credit for outside pursuits ie. sports and music
- the assembly, manipulation, presentation and evaluation of information should be taught as a theme throughout school - computer course or otherwise
- provide more opportunities for teacher development of teaching materials and resources
- course on comparative religions/cultures should be included in the core curriculum

Personnel:

- use procedure already in place for staff dismissal within the district
- "sell" this district as a great place to work
- return to "real" professionalism - upgrading, screening before entry to education - understanding, competence, attitudes, honesty
- more school involvement in staff recruitment (liaison also with community)
- develop programs to expand/address personal wellbeing
- investigate research into motivation and job satisfaction for staffs (what this entails)
- teacher orientation to how the system works and who does what
- less hierarchal structure re responsibilities
- evaluation from all "levels" within the system - not just top down
- media black out during any labour negotiations
- include local "experts" into teaching in schools
- more opportunities for staff development
- students and parents involved in teacher evaluation
- search for existing evaluation formats
- full time personnel/labour relations person who supports staff - should not be involved in negotiations
- experiment in one school with school-based global

- budgeting - school makes all decisions on the allocation of funds except for salaries
- staff forums and feedback regarding all Board decisions
 - two way sharing of personnel resources between the community and the SD - include students also
 - criteria for the selection of substitute teachers should be the same as that for regular teachers because of new contract policies
 - should be criteria other than marks for entry into teacher education - SD should liaise with Malaspina in selection process
 - formal recognition of personality and inter-personal skills in the hiring process
 - labour groups need to be full participants in quality improvement in and of the district
 - should be cooperative labour process based on binding arbitration
 - bargaining process should be based on problem solving model rather than adversarial model
 - teacher training should be ongoing - partnership between Malaspina and SD
 - bargaining process should have ethical base built in to avoid "cheap shots"
 - full, prior training of support staff before implementation of new equipment and procedures in classrooms
 - investigate non-monetary methods of appreciating and recognizing teachers
 - identify master teachers as educational leaders - not necessarily department heads
 - consider moving to provincial bargaining - would result in provincial equity
 - staff appointments should be commensurate with skills
 - appropriate staff training in technology at school level - release time, support at school level - support staff also

Materials:

- smaller schools - elementary 300 students, secondary 500 students maximum
- seniors involvement in school programs
- provide facilities for preparing lunch for under-privileged
- libraries should be designed for modern information technologies
- seek out-of-system sources of funding
- funding for technology should include support staff, software and replacement and maintenance of equipment
- payroll should be allocated over twelve months- year round schools
- continued yearly funding for regular classroom materials and equipment

- staff training for new equipment and programs
- more windows in classrooms
- wiring for distributed computer networks
- better air circulation
- native landscaping
- low maintenance materials both inside and outside
- student/staff input into planning
- kitchen in every school
- more out-of-class student quiet areas
- lighting of playing fields
- move bulletin boards down to child height
- schools should be general community sites
- buildings should be usable in hot weather - air conditioning
- seatbelts for students on school buses
- link between community and school transportation
- improve teacher work areas and staffrooms
- should be a parent meeting room in every school
- allocate funds for out of school time access to buildings
- pro-active work in addressing funding needs
- use technology for community use for funding
- build in an evaluation process for equipment process
- fund in proportion to school need for equipment and class size
- need more busing for Kindergarten students
- "breakout" areas for teachers to work with small groups
- private places for parent conferences
- maximum flexibility in interior of buildings to allow adjustment of floor/room plans for the future (for learning modes/environment)
- community/education sharing of facilities
- limit of 300 in elementary schools and 500 in secondary schools
- pre-planning of physical design
- ease of access for disabled
- modular component to all schools
- larger classrooms
- daycare facilities in all schools
- more and larger covered areas
- student and staff participation in grounds keeping
- handicapped facilities
- more natural lighting
- full spectrum lighting
- multi-purpose rooms in all schools
- observation facility for student teachers
- schools should be energy efficient for winter

Community:

- liaison between city and SD to discuss future of district education (task force)
- Health/social services should be located in schools

- and community
- break bureaucracy barriers - re-examine labour interaction
- open schools to community - examine access and procedures - should be year round
- identify local experts and have them provide their knowledge/skills in schools
- re-evaluation of work experience to properly identify suitable "businesses" to ensure that students/businesses both benefit - meaningful experience (plus evaluations)
- senior participation in daycares located at schools
- P.R. to promote involvement/education of schools/communities - two way
- cooperative efforts to access training/procedures of major corporations
- work experience for teachers to view "outside" jobs/opportunities/organizations
- discussions between schools/businesses for program development - between teachers/businesspeople
- broaden view of community to include the school
- College tie in - share resources/ stop duplication/ stress opportunities to work together - parks and rec and city also
- community education should fall under the joint umbrella of Malaspina/school district and parks and rec - joint planning
- more field trip funding to access more contact with community
- encourage exchange visits with other classrooms in the district/province
- daycare, seniors centre and seniors' daycare in schools
- community involvement in environmental issues with the SD
- promotion within the schools of the sources of expertise available in the community
- students should be given credit for volunteer charitable community work
- principals should make schools more community aware and connected
- school/Malaspina teacher training - give student teachers more school opportunities - more teacher involvement in teacher training

IDEAS, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

March 23, 1991

Task Force Forum

"Consider the concept of the 'resident caretaker'. Provide accomodation on larger school sites."

INFORMATION GATHERING

March 28, 1991

Elementary Students

TASK FORCE MEMBERS: Dave Williamson, George Duffell, Betty Shaw, Elizabeth Pennell, Tony Dobson, Robyn Clements, Marg Smith

PLACE: C.R.C.

ATTENDANCE: 60 elementary students

TOTAL: 67

BRAINSTORMING:

Programs:

- more enrichment classes
- more teachers for working with slower individuals
- more house games
- bigger variety of sports activities
- more education about current issues facing students
- assemblies to summarize past week and plan for next week
- field trips relating to course material eg. Egypt - visit museum
- use of other facilities in district - field trips - eg. use of Malaspina gym
- 15 minute "spares" to talk to friends
- get involved in community activities eg. a group of students visit old people
- better preparation for high school - field trips to secondary schools
- different band (music) options eg. Dixieland
- more class time with counsellors
- more programs for students to assist community groups such as disabled
- longer holidays
- more peer counselling and Steps to Maturity
- more classes like chemistry and biology
- baby-sitting classes
- programs to make smaller children aware eg. self care
- more hands-on field trips
- more efforts with pre-schoolers
- more parties
- vacation times should be spread throughout year
- two weeks vacation where you want it
- leatherwork
- school nurses
- more communication between elementary and secondary schools
- horse back riding
- night-time dances
- more experienced teachers

- sports teams for younger kids
- teachers need more preparation time
- student council where students and teachers are on an equal level
- students should be able to work at their own pace
- more talking about government
- more social activities for primary
- keep competition to inspire students
- make class more interesting - experiments, demonstrations, guest speakers
- drama club
- more cooperative learning group work
- build awareness of physical and mental handicaps by visiting group homes
- more group activities like school plays
- older kids take pre-schoolers on tour of school in June before they start school
- more work on life skills
- course counselling before students reach secondary
- work experience in local neighbourhood for elementary students
- more school nurses
- more overnight field trips
- frog dissection
- outdoor education -building fires, canoeing, kayaking
- woodworking (twice)
- self defense
- more specialists visiting classrooms
- more lunch hour activities
- longer sock hops
- more dance classes ie. jazz
- more lunch-time activities
- teachers do more extra-curricular activities
- time to discuss current affairs
- field trips to businesses
- students to be able to move forward at a pace that suits their strengths (variety of curriculum materials)
- more assemblies
- programs for in-school tutors
- homework time in-school
- more cross-grade groupings (all the time)
- cooperative learning - at own rate
- cooperative learning - at different levels
- work with community on recycling
- more computer time
- don't cut off gym time for math
- more open houses at school
- more fund raisers - money for field trips
- more variety of school clubs
- cooking/sewing classes
- all round home economics
- programs for parents and students together
- more buddy reading

- sock hops for primary
- metal work and electronics
- more recess
- eat lunch outside
- more computer time

Personnel:

- teachers should let students chew gum
- teachers should let students wear hats
- make bus stops closer to home
- teachers should take time to talk to students when they're not in trouble
- principals should call all students by first names
- principal should listen and take time for students re: improvements to school
- students should not monitor classrooms during lunch
- primary teachers should not assume that older students are vandalizing
- noon hour supervisors should be lenient but follow through with consequences
- teachers should thoroughly explain work/assignments
- students should be given warning before quizzes/tests - no "pop" quizzes
- bus drivers should be flexible in routes
- teachers should give specials "rewards" for achievement ie. BurgerKing
- principals should recognize students/achievements
- principal should get involved in classes
- principal should avoid "disturbing" classes ie. interrupting
- students should have more assistance in dealing with problems
- teachers should not assign blame without proof
- equal communication
- teachers should understand what is happening with student trends
- teachers should do after school sports
- more exchange teachers
- teachers can relate their own experiences to their subjects
- teachers should care about what students think
- teachers should let students talk about what is happening with them
- teachers should not show prejudice or sexism
- teachers should give extra help
- teachers should use a variety of voice levels and tones
- teachers should provide a variety of activities not just books
- teachers should make learning fun -field trips
- should have noonhour supervisors who care and listen

- students should be able to call bus driver by first name
- driver should play music on bus
- noon hour supervisor should take time to help out with a problem
- teachers should not lecture students
- schools should have good quality P.A.'s
- marking should be done out of school time sometimes
- students should relate to teachers and vice versa
- teachers should mix fun with learning
- teachers should consider others' views
- teachers should avoid favourites (pets) - equal treatment for all
- teachers should be enthusiastic
- students should be able to call teachers by their first names
- teachers should not be bothered by nicknames
- teachers should avoid comparing students with each other
- teachers should not insult people
- teachers should give equal/fair treatment to both sexes
- flexible teachers who can change plans to suit circumstances
- janitor should seek advice of students - talk to them
- principal/vice who visit classrooms
- keep schools open longer
- secretary should let students use the telephone without a "third degree"
- two way communication (P.A.) systems
- natural (appropriate) consequences
- students visit principal as reward for good work
- secretary should know students' names
- noon hour supervisors should solve more problems rather than send kids to principal
- noon hour supervisors should be friendlier
- teachers need good senses of humour - give and take a joke
- teachers should give extra help in areas your're poor in
- teachers should mark quickly and spend time at lunch with students who need help
- teachers should be patient
- teachers should be flexible -not stick to timetable all the time
- teachers should trust their students
- teachers should not hold up members of the class as good examples - they become teacher's pets
- teachers should not put students down
- teachers should really teach, not just stand around and talk
- teachers should participate in activities, not just tell kids what to do

- teachers should respect what kids know, no put downs
- teachers should be patient with kids who don't know the answers
- principals should be actively involved with students
- janitor should let you in when you forget your homework
- teachers should not mind being proven wrong
- librarians should understand about books being late
- teachers should not make a big deal of lateness
- teachers should go over tests with students
- more intermediate students should get school awards
- librarians should stay after school to help students
- bus drivers should let you off at other stops without a note from home
- bus drivers should be friendly and speak to students
- principals should be flexible - not "iron-fisted"

Materials:

- schools should use environmentally "friendly" supplies
- better readers with more interesting stories
- recycling bins - students involved
- supervisors in gym for lunch
- sink area in classrooms
- more teachers
- longer lunch hour
- more storage in classes
- more interesting topics/subjects
- safer playgrounds - smoother
- playground equipment for handicapped students
- tennis/badminton courts
- more sports activities offered
- more sports teams
- chemistry sets
- co-ed sports teams
- two-way P.A. system - intercom for teachers
- more computer programs
- more complete gym equipment
- more research books in library
- bigger libraries
- game balls in gym
- equipment check for safety
- new science (updated) texts
- computerized libraries (microfiche)
- modems for program access
- access to photocopiers
- emergency vehicle access to schools
- unbleached paper
- more science equipment
- better water pressure in fountains
- better desks - flat top - square to fit with others
- better air circulation
- adjustable legs on desks

- durable flooring rather than carpeting
- "earthquake proof" lighting
- cracked walls should be fixed
- bigger classrooms
- more interesting colours inside
- larger buildings
- bigger gym
- vermin and vandal-proof compost
- more sophisticated art classes
- should be able to stay in at lunch in some indoor area
- more classrooms
- more after school activities
- should talk more about government
- should be nets on outdoor basketball hoops
- lacrosse boxes
- better paint on outdoor equipment
- volleyball nets outside
- better volleyballs
- more microscopes and slides
- more proper baseball diamonds
- more footballs
- newer uniforms
- areas to skateboard and ride bikes on grounds
- supervisors in gym at lunch time
- more teachers on duty at lunch
- more hands-on activities
- smaller class sizes
- different lighting - natural rather than fluorescent
- desks that have more storage
- more comfortable chairs
- curtains/blinds that work better
- wooden schools that are earthquake proof
- modernize facilities such as washrooms
- fewer portables
- theatres on end of gyms
- more fire escape routes
- more shelving in rooms
- ramps, etc. for disabled
- other safety drills ie. first aid
- bigger fields and playgrounds
- first aid courses for students
- schools open after hours ie. nights
- more computers
- more modern VCR's and TV's
- schools should stock replacement exercise books, etc.
- seatbelts on school buses
- internal computer modems in office
- encyclopedias on CD ROM
- newer, up to date, videos
- encyclopedias that can be taken home
- bigger gym equipment rooms
- more gym equipment ie. as for gymnastics
- better quality art paper and paints

- teach students how to sort and recycle

Community:

- one nurse on call for a group of schools
- working people in community should be resources for schools in their fields
- should be periodic health inspections of schools
- parents in schools - what they are doing
- easier to access city buses for schools/classes
- college people to teach some of their courses at elementary schools
- more community tolerance for French Immersion
- more information re college/university
- perform plays with whole community (adults and children)
- no favouritism in schools from teachers to students
- more fieldtrips into community
- more exposure to high schools - students and classes
- invite community for games, activities
- students to help in volunteer places - Senior citizens, S.P.C.A., etc
- community people as helpers in classes
- involvement in recycling fairs
- more chances to meet people from different cultures
- community worker should visit classrooms to explain their jobs ie. loggers
- schools should be used as community halls
- professional athletes should visit schools -play with and teach students
- schools should have more contacts with other countries and cultures
- more entertainers in schools - fine arts
- environmental clubs with students and adults from community
- students should be decision makers at schools ie. playground equipment
- community should accept students as equals - not lesser because they are younger
- students should be allowed to patronize neighbourhood store at lunch time
- elementary students should be taught more about career possibilities
- careers night with guest speakers
- field trips should be voluntary for students
- more helping people coming into schools ie. nurse, counsellor
- students should visit college to learn more about it
- community "fun" days
- health nurse should be fulltime at schools
- school nurse should have only a few schools to visit on call
- government should spend more money on education
- school facilities should be available to community

- schools should discuss what is happening in community
- more trees on playground
- more interaction with exchange students
- students could visit (register) in other countries
- courses in how to apply for jobs and write resumes
- college people explain things to students
- students should be present in parent/principal discussions
- parents should not be in schools
- student exchanges - school to school

WHAT ONE THING WOULD YOU CHANGE?

Elementary Student Forum

March 28, 1991

Suggestions:

- bigger gyms - higher ceilings
- better teachers
- better washrooms
- better sports equipment
- more equipment for schools
- more outdoor playground equipment
- bigger and safer schools
- bigger gyms and bigger gym equipment rooms
- emergency modem linkups between schools
- more hands-on activities
- smaller classes
- more computers/lessons
- more programs of local interest
- fewer students/more individual attention
- more teachers
- better science/safety
- modernized schools
- better computer/software
- bigger, modernized classrooms
- fewer portables - bigger schools
- telephones for students
- more safety features in buildings and buses
- bigger gyms/more equipment
- more enrichment
- cooking classes
- more computers
- better kitchens
- more school buses
- more advanced classes
- more difficult/updated texts

IDEAS , COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

March 28, 1991

Elementary Student Forum

"More information re: consequences of dropping out of school."

1. "At least one computer per classroom because the Year 2000 is probably based on computers."
2. "Let the children become involved with senior citizens."
3. "Repaint buses. Yellow is boring."
4. "Visit local fire station or police station."
5. "Not make slow students go to two schools. It would be too much pressure."
6. "Have recycling committee."
7. "More outdoor playground equipment."
8. "More advanced classes for advanced students."
9. "More school, less portables."
10. "Better teachers!"

"Dances with lots of different schools.
Teachers who keep personal problems to themselves don't bring out on students."

"Access to the school kitchen.
Longer dances.
Fewer students."

"Private shower rooms.
You shouldn't give kids extra time because they're behind.
They should catch up with the class themselves.
Fresher air in the washroom.
Nets on hoop for basketball outside.
We shouldn't have to take a course if we don't want to."

"Have more programs for awareness of animals and the environment.
Better toilet paper dispensers (so they roll on the rollers freely)."

"I like teachers who let kids write their own plays and don't write it for them."

"More inter-school activities like two or three schools going on the same field trip."

"More bus transportation to carry all the students."

"A swimming pool just for school children that could be used during P.E.
Children could do community services instead of serving detentions."

"Choirs/music programs are needed.
Teacher programs - to update them on any new programs, ideas, etc.
Helping younger children in their classroom. More resource material.
Health programs - school nurses, etc.
More involvement with parents. More notices going home.
Go and visit older people who need cheering up - adopt a Grandma.
The school should go to the community, not them to us.
More guidance counsellors."

"An auditorium.
French immersion in all schools."

"Not having principals walk into the classrooms every hour.
Teachers that can explain new things when you don't really know what you're doing and showing you what they want done say on projects.
Not having janitors locking the school so early."

"New gym floor - hardwood.
Crossing guard or lights.
Better security in portables.
Fill potholes in driveway.
More field trips - if it's more interesting we learn more.
Buddy system - first year primary and intermediate."

"Music classes for Grades 6,7 instead of just band.
Hot lunches in a cafeteria.
Modern dance classes - not square dancing.
Sick room - including a nurse.
Teachers should supply drinks for portable classrooms.
Air conditioning for portables and upstairs classrooms."

"Our class worked really hard on a project each. It took this teacher an hour to mark all of them. We like a teacher who has respect for our hard work and marks fairly. I like principals who get involved in events like sports. Teachers that you feel comfortable talking to. Get bathroom taps that you don't have to hold to keep the water running. I don't think parents should be involved in supervising classes because they tend to shadow their own children. But parents can work in the office, etc. Parents versus teachers and students fun day. Nurses coming in and giving eye and ear tests - maybe a school nurse. Clean up the community - litter, etc."

"Smaller class, more smoke alarms, student council, metal work."

"Pottery classes.
Bigger playground.
More comfortable chairs such as the ones we're sitting on today.
Longer French classes.
Longer math periods."

"More than one foreign language to be learned in school or a choice."

"French teachers that know what they're talking about - that can speak French properly."

"Showers for older schools that don't have them.
A place to put your band instrument with a lock."